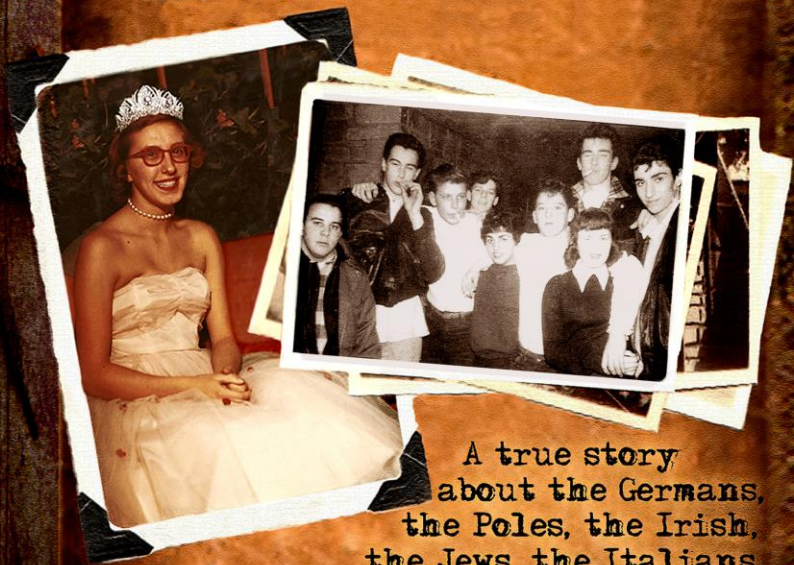


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of Milwaukee's
EASTSIDE



A true story
about the Germans,
the Poles, the Irish,
the Jews, the Italians,
and the Greeks.

By Thelma "Queen Tillie" Kamuchey
and Jim "Rabbi" Hanley
and Countless Eastside Contributors

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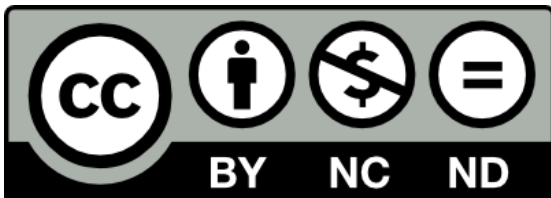
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Our story is dedicated to our fellow eastsiders who were taken from us far too early. Be it ever so late, it is in some respects an apology to our parents, neighbors, and our teachers who put up with us and our crazy antics. This is our heartfelt thank you for leading us and for loving us.

We also thank Anita Neuman Doubek, Riverside class of '54, and a retired English teacher, for her tenacious effort in editing the countless mistakes in our endeavor. Her eagle eye and passion for proper English will make this easier for you to digest.

***“Our memories of Milwaukee’s East Side
cannot be dulled or rendered impotent
even by the corrosive Chemistry of Time.”
Billy Gee, Circa 1983
1969 Riverside H.S. Graduate***

INTRODUCTION

Both of us have longed to tell the story about the unusual neighborhood we grew up in. We considered it not only unique, but also exceedingly special, in addition to countless friends of ours that are absolutely thrilled to be a part of our account of this wonderful phenomenon that no longer exists ... ***the neighborhood.***

We hope to do justice to our chronicle as we call upon our memories to bring back those joyous events that put smiles on our faces or tears in our eyes. Perhaps you had reminiscences such as ours, but we sense that today's youth are being robbed of countless memories.

Our children love hearing stories from our past, stories that we tell them over and over ... perhaps you will also.

The names of our friends have not been changed. Names like Ziggy, Snooky the Greek, Buzzy the Rat, Crazy John, Nuts Edna, Johnny Hose, Mumbles, Alan Ladd, Twelve O'clock Noon, Chief, two different Aces, the Bird Faced Boys (twins), Captain Midnight, Dicky Polak, Smelly, the Midget, One Arm Benny, Ape Shit, the Field Mouse, Bobby Jazz Bag, Words, the Case of the Missing Tooth, Philadelphia Worm, Jojo Brunetto, and of course, Queen Tillie and Rabbi Jim.

Some of the adults and teachers were known only to us as Homer, the Book Worm, Rudy the Midget, Alcoholic Ethel, Tony the Parkman, Dave the Cop, Old Man Schneider, Mr. W, the Lady in the Window, and a handful of others that you're going to soon hear about.

With names like these we were destined to have fun and surprises. And with this list of characters we will submit to you events that helped shape our lives, events that we can't get out of our minds even after fifty or sixty years have passed.

We hope to disclose and conclude that neighborhoods such as ours were proving grounds and lessons in life that influenced our character and our passion for living. You'll see that most of us were indeed *stinkers*, some even worse, but were eventually fashioned into some pretty respectable human beings while a few others might not have fared so well.

We endeavor to unveil the secrets and tell those somewhat forgotten stories that each home in our neighborhood had stored away in their treasured vault of antiquity; stories that might just remind you of one or more that remain hidden in your very own vault.

Chapter One

**“I am always drawn back to
places where I have lived,
the houses and the neighborhoods.”**

Truman Capote

The era we grew up in, when we learned about life, developed lasting friendships, and gave birth to those countless, delightful and not so delightful memories has been gluttonously devoured by the computer age. Unfortunately, it died a regretful and mournful death never again to be revived.

We grew up on the eastside of Milwaukee a few blocks from the fabulous shore of Lake Michigan. Our neighborhood was akin to our immediate family; the two were indivisible. Milwaukee was and continues to be one of society’s special melting pots. It’s that “Beer City” Mecca that’s made up of middle-class Germans, Poles, Irish, Italian, Jewish, and Greek neighborhoods. We are so proud, bordering on arrogant, about calling Milwaukee our home. Thomas Wolfe’s bestseller, ***You Can’t Go Home Again***, makes Milwaukeeans cringe over such a sacrilegious thought.

While our fathers worked, our mothers managed the households. They were masters of the budget. We never had a clue that we were poor, thanks to our mothers’ finagling.

Out of the ten immediate blocks within our sector, I recall less than a handful of the families that owned cars—public transportation was our mode of travel. Dads took the streetcars to work and families rode the clanging trolley cars to a wondrous shopping event downtown on Wisconsin Avenue. Streetcars and buses ran on a tight schedule and were rarely late.

Then there were the trains. Those smelly, smog producing steel giants that cut a path through Milwaukee's east side. There was the Chicago Northwestern and the 400, the streamlined model that never failed to catch our attention as it left in its wake a cloud of smoke and an ear-piercing warning horn.

But the characteristic that stood out most in our neighborhood melting pot was the fact that there were children in practically every home. This meant that we had countless friends, enabling us to experience wondrous incidents—incidents that are the center of our story.

We grew up in the '40s and the '50s. It was a special time, a time for celebration, and a time for thankfulness. The Great Depression left us wiser while World War II united us. It was a time for enjoying life and for building lasting friendships. It was a generation to end all generations.

The character of Milwaukee was never stronger than it was back in 1945. With the world's Great War coming to an end Milwaukeeans were joyfully caught up with the life of a mother duck and her small contingent of offsprings.

Just outside the door of Gimbel's Department store and below the drawbridge on Wisconsin Avenue sat a mother duck, or a soon to be mother. She was nesting upon a wood piling that jutted out of the murky Milwaukee River. Underneath the mother's protective feathers lay six eggs. This scene became a rallying point for Milwaukeean's who came from far and wide to witness this miracle of nature.

Everyone in Milwaukee knew about Gertie the Duck and ventured down to Wisconsin Avenue to view it firsthand. Crowds of people pushed and shoved on the bridge in order to catch a mere glimpse of Gertie. They read the reports each day in the

Milwaukee Journal and listened to the radio bulletins on WTMJ.

Gertie would eventually give birth to five little duckies and books would be written about the event and Milwaukeeans would be better because of it. Yeah, it was kind of hokey, but Milwaukeean's old enough to remember still smile and feel good about it.

Today's children are sequestered by protective parents, obsessively involved in a cornucopia of video games, driven to their soccer games and dance classes and school by doting parents in the family van. This is Americana my friend. Shoot, you don't even know the name of your next-door neighbor, while we knew everyone's name and family history within a four-block radius, not to mention the fact that we also knew how much money they made and what they spent it on.

We ate together as a family around the kitchen, or the dining room table in the larger families, because eating out, unlike today was a luxury, seldom, if ever practiced. The meals were Spartan, yet nutritious. Our mothers were culinary queens in preparing meals—routinely making something out of nothing. I always preferred my mom's meatloaf to filet mignon.

We got all the fixins at our neighborhood store. Regardless of where you lived in the city, you'd never have to walk more than a block or two to a neighborhood store; the supermarkets came much later. Since we lived in Milwaukee, let it be known that taverns were much closer and far more frequent. It was rumored that there was at least one tavern on every four-cornered street throughout the city.

Shopping for groceries became a daily ritual because the freezer section of our refrigerator was miniscule at best. Not every family had refrigerators; some had ice-boxes. These appliances of the

past were kept cool by the large blocks of ice delivered weekly by an ice man. We children were given the task of emptying the drip pan when the ice melted.

The early hour milkman delivered quarts of milk every other day, leaving bottles on our front porch or in our milk chute. As kids we fought to fetch the milk from the porch during the winter months because the frigid temperatures caused the milk to freeze and the cream on the top rose and popped off the cap. This phenomenon left a couple of inches of frozen cream that we devoured before placing the milk in our fridge.

Every neighborhood had family grocery stores. Ours were Schwatz's, Retzer's, and Oberdautz. Most families had a running tab that was recorded in little notebook pads by the owners of the stores, which was an early version of charging items. I can still envision Mrs. Schwartz getting out her pad and with a stub of a pencil; she'd enter the items that I had just charged for my mother. Mom would pay off the debt on Friday when dad got paid. I loved shopping at Schwartz's, but I had a pact with mom. I would go willingly, but I would not get her Moddess ... not on your life! There was always a younger brother we could send in our place.

Those of us old enough to remember the 40s recall milk companies, such as Bordens and Golden Guernsey, who made their daily deliveries by way of horse drawn wagons. Then there were the ash man, the iceman, and the ragman, all of whom sat aboard horse drawn wagons. Another street vendor was the knife sharpener who zigzagged through the streets of Milwaukee pushing his cart while ringing his loud bell that announced to all, "Come and get your knives and scissors sharpened."

We never went to summer camp, took family vacations, or had sleepovers. We were expected to entertain ourselves by playing in

Riverside Park. When we were younger, we made forts and castles in the sandbox, flew through the air on the swings, bounced up and down on the teeter-totters, and capped off the day with a few trips up and down our magical slide. It was magical because it brought smiles to our faces and produced a giggle in everyone. There were no parents around, only Tony the Parkman who always kept a sharp eye on us.

While we were doing boy things like playing ball or getting in trouble, the gals did their own thing like playing with dolls or dressing up that we wanted no part of. They did the dress up like mom thing, played hopscotch on the sidewalk, and became grand masters of the jump rope.

Every evening before it got dark outside, all of the neighborhood kids got together for our nightly battery of games. Once again there would be no parent interference as we playfully frolicked through our favorite games. Kick the Can, Hide 'n Seek, King of the Hill, Fifty all Scatter, Red Rover, and Simon Says were only a few of the ways that we amused ourselves. Then when the streetlights went on, or the church bells rang, it was the signal that it was time to head for home; our merriment for the day had come to an end. We rarely missed the streetlight curfew because we didn't want to answer to our mothers.

Mom would always have a light snack like graham crackers and milk waiting for us as we got comfy and curled up on the floor in front of our family radio. We listened to *Mr. District Attorney*, *Amos and Andy*, *the Lone Ranger*, *the Life of Riley*, and *the Shadow* only a few of the radio shows we listened to before turning in. Sometimes we would fall asleep in front of the radio and mom or dad would have to roust us up to our bedroom.

WWII was a big part of our young lives as we entered into the

'40s, however, our concern and insight fell far short of the impact that it had on our parents. Without television our perspective of the world's greatest conflict was limited to the newsreels at the Oriental Theater; newsreels that showed America's strength as our military stormed beaches in the Pacific, dropped bombs on Japan, and used tanks in Europe and Africa to overpower the Nazis.

Our grade school teachers spent some time on current events, yet most of their lessons taught us how to take cover under our desks or how to exit down the fire escape in case the Japs or Nazis had their sights on invading Milwaukee.

We did our part by participating in buying defense stamps at school for a dime, and when our book was filled, we'd receive a savings bond. The stamps were sold at school every Tuesday. The money went towards our nation's defense and it made us proud to help out our soldiers in our battle for freedom.

Most of the guys loved doodling and drawing pictures of B-19s, American tanks, American flags, and Kilroy—a phenomenon of the '40s and the subject of graffiti spread around the city. The words, *Kilroy Was Here*, were plastered all over America. Personally speaking, I was a master of the B-17 with its turrets and bombs being dropped to the enemy below. The girls drew pictures of themselves as Florence Nightengales helping and caring for our wounded servicemen.

Our parents often discussed the war around the home and when FDR came on the radio during a fireside chat, everything stopped and we all gathered around the radio to listen to the latest news from the front.

We intimately knew soldiers and sailors and marines; our boys that traveled across the seas to fight for democracy and freedom for all. My Uncle Bob (my mother's younger brother) was a naval

officer aboard a submarine that helped clean up the mess in the Pacific. The Casalena boys served, as did countless friends of Uncle Bob; all of them spent some time at our house. Donnie Buchholz and John Iverson, Newhall Street neighbors, also defended democracy abroad. Uncle Bob was so official looking and so handsome in his white officer's uniform. Women felt the same about him.

Many of our neighbors who had fathers, sons, or daughters serving in the military had small flags or banners hanging in their front windows. Each star on the banner depicted the number of family members serving our country. A gold star meant that someone had died in action. A silver star meant that they were missing in action. A purple heart meant that they were wounded in action. Milwaukee was a multicultural community, but united in its patriotism.

Some of the boys didn't make it back, which took its toll on the adults, but they kept the bad news from us. As a kid I never fathomed the finality of death. It wasn't the sort of topic that families discussed back then ... and I imagine that it's a rare thing today as well. A couple of Bob's teammates on Riverside's championship football teams (Riverside High School went undefeated from 1935 through 1939 with 32 wins and 0 losses) passed away overseas. I remembered my mother weeping over their deaths.

Some of our parents still had families living in Europe and when we heard the news of deaths overseas, the loss and sadness affected all of us.

When the death of Mr. Kamuchey's father in Greece reached the family, the patriarch sat in his favorite chair and wept. When he was all cried out, he put his Greek records on the Victorola and

danced slowly around the living room to the mournful music.

The Kamuchey children learned that their grandfather, whom they never met, fought in the Greco-Turkish War in order to gain freedom from Turkey.

At the age of ten or eleven I recall walking down to Farwell and North to see General Douglas MacArthur in a victory parade after the war had ended. It was a show of America's pride and support. MacArthur had ties to Milwaukee. At one time he lived at the Plankinton House and attended West Division High School; one of our rivals. Milwaukee Congressman, Theobald Otjen, appointed him to the U.S. Military Academy.

During the 40s we experienced polio epidemics and during the summer of '44 we were quarantined for the entire summer. We weren't the only ones either, because all children under the age of twelve were placed under "House Quarantine" in the cities of Detroit, Milwaukee, and Pittsburgh. In order for children to leave the premises they needed permission from the City Health Department. We made do because we had no choice. Could you imagine today's youth being stuck in the house all summer without TV or computer games?

Mike Balister was diagnosed with polio in the mid '40s. The ailing young lad was taken to Children's Hospital where he shared a room with about forty other children suffering from polio. They were quarantined there until the fever passed. Every day they were treated with the Sister Kenney Treatment, which amounted to dipping wool blankets in boiling water and wrapping them around the affected limbs. They oftentimes produced burns because of the heat.

You could always hear the screams of children receiving these treatments. The treatments done twice daily were intended to aid

in regaining feeling and the use of the affected muscles. They also received some physical therapy.

The children occasionally witnessed a bed being wheeled out of the ward with a body on it and they realized that a friend had left them. Some remained in the hospital for many months. Mike was one of the lucky ones—not needing an iron lung.

After his release, Mike went to Gaenslen School, which was across the river from Bartlett and near the Pumping Station. He received the needed therapy there to learn how to walk and move his limbs all over again. His doting mother had her own form of therapy where she took Mike to Bradford Beach in the summer and buried his crippled legs in the hot sand and then exercised them. Dr. Blount, a well-known specialist in the field, treated many of the stricken children.

When fifth-grade came, Mike once and for all rejoined his friends at Bartlett Avenue School to resume the normal school year again. Mike was the only one of us that got polio, despite his being quarantined like the rest of us.

Mr. Works, a Bartlett Avenue resident, was the first germaphobe that any of us knew. He was genuinely concerned about the health of the neighborhood and decided to take matters into his own hands. Since no one knew the cause of the polio outbreak, Mr. Works surmised that it was somehow related to cleanliness.

So back in '44 he rallied the neighborhood, and with brooms and buckets and mops, this anti-polio brigade took to scouring the alley on Bartlett Avenue from Riverside Place to Park Place. They cleaned the horse poop from the rag man and the milk man, and they sanitized the trash barrels along with every inch of the alleyway. It became a neighborhood project that everyone felt

good about. The adults felt good about it while the kids could have cared less. They were instead delighted to have the opening of school delayed in September due to the epidemic.

Then the next winter, the memorable winter of '47, Milwaukee experienced the snowstorm to end all snowstorms. Snow banks reached the eaves of the two-story homes. Men were marooned at work as the city was at a standstill. There were no cars on the streets and no public transportation. Those that ventured onto the streets wore skis. Adults didn't know what to do, but we sure did. We made forts and tunnels and waged war with our neighbor kids. The ammunition—snowballs, snowballs, and more snowballs. It was a true winter wonderland.

Growing older, we played ball in the park like the older guys and dilly-dallied across Acorn Hill to the Milwaukee River where we were pleasurably introduced to the sport of fishing. We captured bluegill and bullheads with delightful regularity. When we became daring, we went over to Retzer's Market to purchase a few cents' worth of liver from Phil the butcher. With the liver as bait, we reeled in buckets of crayfish—a rather frightening specimen for young kids like us.

When the summer temperature rose, we'd trek a few blocks down to Bradford Beach to cool off in the icy waters of Lake Michigan, or else we'd cross the river to take a plunge in Gordon Pool. We played and we swam all day long, never tiring. There were times when we'd travel down to Caesar's Pool or jump in the stagnant waters of the Milwaukee River, that is until the Killjoys put a stop to our folly. The Killjoys, as they were commonly referred to, were Milwaukee Police Officers that patrolled the River in a speedboat. As I look back, their only job was to keep skinny dipping kids like us out of the river. Their job was both

cushy and much sought after.

On the way home we'd sneak into neighbors' yards and raid their fruit trees. We knew where all the best thorn apple, plum, apple, peach, and pear trees were located. We filled our pockets so we had snacks for the rest of the day. In reflection, I guess that the neighbors sort of permitted our folly by not telling our parents.

During those frigid winters that Milwaukee is famous for, we had even less trouble entertaining ourselves. Mom would bundle us up in our winter coats, galoshes, mittens, caps and scarves and we'd march down to the omnipresent Devil's Hill in Riverside Park with our sleds or cardboard boxes purloined from Schwartz's Grocery Store. For the novice sledder there was Baby's Hill, a safe and less dangerous slope than the near mountainous peak of Devil's Hill, which was only for the more experienced of sledders.

Our buddy David Ladwig lived directly across the street from Devil's Hill and would periodically stretch out his garden hose in order to flood the hill and allow the freezing weather to transform it into a hill of ice. It became an Olympic style bobsled run; a dangerous one to novice sledders.

We spent hours there walking and trudging and lumbering back to the top of the hill while pulling our American Flyers behind us. The Wettsteins had a toboggan and some of our more daring friends flew down the hill on skis. Only the freezing weather would keep us from spending the entire day there. It is important for you to know that there was never an adult within shouting distance.

When we grew older, we were given the freedom to venture through the park to the Milwaukee River where as gleefully anticipated, the water had turned to ice. The ice was normally around ten to twelve inches thick. Our designated skating area was

located directly below the Locust Street Bridge and adjacent to the park's toboggan slide and the Milwaukee Curling Club. On the opposite side of the river was the old, musty smelling pavilion where we'd change into our ice skates and have a chance to warm up with a cup of hot cocoa purchased for a mere pittance of five cents. Next to the pavilion was the small boathouse where the Killjoys stored their speedboat.

Before our time, the pavilion served as a bath house where the neighborhood people could change into their swimsuits before jumping into a relatively clean Milwaukee River. Gordon Pool put an end to swimming in the river.

This is where we were introduced to our neighbors from the other side of the river, most of whom were Polish. We'd skate together, play hockey with each other, and when we reached puberty, we would show off for members of the opposite sex.

During these winter months we would get our first taste of earning money by shoveling the snow off the sidewalks of our elderly neighbors, earning between twenty-five and fifty cents; for us a veritable fortune. Sometimes we'd venture to the upper eastside and the ritzier homes. We absolutely loved the snow. Eventually we held down paper routes, set pins at the local bowling alley, and babysat. We were real entrepreneurs. Those of us that were fortunate enough received an allowance for which we were expected to do chores, our homework, and be on our best behavior. Our piggy banks cheerfully accepted our twenty-five cent stipend each Sunday.

Speaking of Sunday, it was bath day in most households. Every home came equipped those old claw legged tubs that were designed for comfort and the ultimate of relaxation. None of our friends had showers in their home. Our first taste of taking

showers occurred later when we went swimming at Gordon Pool and eventually after our high school gym class. Undressing in front of our peers, or anyone as far as that goes, took a major adjustment for each of us.

Chapter Two

**“School is like a lollipop.
It sucks until it is gone.”**

Ambrose Bierce

Schools were strategically scattered all over our beloved Eastside. All were within a short jaunt, and with immense pleasure became our home away from home for a minimum of thirteen years. Our particular elementary school—K through eight—was Bartlett Avenue School. We might not have been the best of students, but we developed a love affair with our schools.

Our school gave us a solid foundation to build our lives upon as well as preparation for schools of higher learning.

Bartlett was an intimidating, dirty gray, Gothic looking structure that appeared to have seen better days. With three floors of classrooms, an attic area and a basement, from eight to three, it became home. We all lived close enough to be able to go home for lunch since there was no cafeteria at Bartlett.

En route to school, we were greeted each day by Dave the Cop on the corner of Bartlett and Locust, a busy intersection necessitating a crossing guard. As Dave escorted us from one side to the other, we were treated to a bit of Dave’s wisdom and witticism each morning. Witticisms like, “Did you wash your eyes out this morning?”

We’d always answer, “yes,” and Dave responded, “Well how’d ya get ‘em back in?” He never failed to make sure that we arrived at school with smiles on our faces.

Mike Balister remembers another one of Dave’s witticisms.

Dave asked, “Did you have your radio on last night?”

“Yes, we did Dave.”

“Well how did it fit?”

Sixty some years later we readily recall those little jokes told to us from our neighborhood cop and we still remember them. Now that’s good comedy. And it just goes to show you that something that you do and say will not go unnoticed by someone, so be careful about what you say.

Despite its outward appearance, you could see your image on the polished hardwood floors of the venerable structure, thanks to the hard work and diligence of Ray Netko, our popular school janitor. For six or seven years Mr. Netko was the only male on the staff of Bartlett Avenue School.

It was at Bartlett where we learned to accept the authority of our teachers and the school administrators, most of the time anyways. It was where we nurtured and formed everlasting friendships and had our minds tested and widened by a group of educators that were true professionals and never considered babysitters. God forbid! They were stern, unyielding, and they were well prepared to mold us and groom us for future trials. Each of them deservedly earned our respect.

Our classmates remain friends today. After all, with few exceptions we were together for the nine years of elementary school and an additional four years of high school. We grew up in the same fashion, were cloistered in classrooms together, played together, got in trouble together, and we embraced life together. How could we not be friends?

Of course, there were other elementary schools on our Eastside, schools that friends of ours attended. There was Maryland Avenue School, Hartford Avenue School, and the two parochial schools ... St Peter and Paul and Holy Rosary. Milwaukee University School,

a private school, was nearby as well but it was only for the most affluent; those rich kids that wore white bucks and ties and suits to class. You might call them our adversaries. The students from the nearby Milwaukee suburbs of Shorewood and Whitefish Bay were clones of those from MUS.

Myron Stamos migrated to our east side from the lower east side with a couple of his close pals; Russell Rose, Artie Huth, and Angelo Nazeres. They attended Jefferson Street Grade School, which was just a few blocks from Lincoln High School. Myron refers to our area as the upper crust folk. The four of them were instrumental in bringing a bit of frivolity and spirit to their newly adopted homes.

Our proud and popular high school, the first public high school in Milwaukee, was often referred to as East Division; but its official moniker was Riverside High School. East enjoyed a superb tradition—both academic and athletic. Our teachers and coaches were dedicated educators, some outstanding and others ... well, let's say that we gave them a hard time. Riverside was far classier looking than Bartlett Avenue. It stood out like a beacon ... an ivy-covered brick building with four floors of classrooms, three gymnasiums, a theater sized auditorium, and adjacent athletic fields. Riverside took up a square block of prime real estate. There were over two thousand students and was the setting where we formed more wonderful relationships. Many students happened to meet their future wives and husbands there.

It was our first opportunity to get excited about the opposite sex, work with adult coaches, have our own lockers, be conscious of how we looked and dressed, and make plans for our future. Riverside High School became our proving grounds.

Lincoln was our other eastside high school that also housed a

school for the deaf where some of our friends attended. For those planning on learning a trade, they were forced to travel to the south side of Milwaukee to attend Boy's Tech. Our Catholic friends attended one of the two nearby parochial high schools; Messmer or St. John's Cathedral. A few of our Bartlett classmates sadly moved on to other schools.

Chapter Three

**“Growing up happens in a heartbeat.
One day you’re in diapers, the next day
You’re gone. But the memories of childhood
Stay with you for the long haul.”**

The Wonder Years

As we grew older, the allure of the parks and the playgrounds gradually disappeared because we craved more exciting pursuits. It was a new stage ... a time to move on. So instead of playing “Farmer Brown Let Me Down” on the teeter-totters we sought opportunities to mingle with the opposite sex and display our manliness or our femininity. It was our experimental stage as we were bombarded from all sides by an anticipated barrage of those things that our parents referred to as hormones.

Our voices changed, pubic hairs sprouted, the guy’s muscles began developing as the gal’s boobs took shape. Some of us chose to show off by smoking while others thought that cursing was cool. Some did both. Our fondness for sports remained strong in addition to the new leisure pursuit of listening to music on our radios. *Rock around the Clock* was partially responsible for our sudden change of interest, and the movie, *Blackboard Jungle*, was all the motivation we needed to justify our new vocabulary. *Cool*, *Daddy-O*, *What’s Happening?* and *Far Out* were repeated with disturbing regularity and ever-so frequent chiding from our parents. But anyway, you looked at it we were indeed “cool.”

The radio still ruled, as the television was still in its infancy stage. Few families were blessed with the new kid on the block, but those that possessed this electronic phenomenon became the

most popular members of the neighborhood. Living rooms were set up like theaters, bowls of popcorn were prepared, and the invitations went out for the entire neighborhood to come and see this marvel firsthand, all six to eight inches of it. Most of the early screens were round, barely the size of a softball.

Despite the advent of the television, we continued patronizing our local theaters. The cost was a dime and popcorn cost a whole nickel. For all that money we would get to see two feature films, two or three cartoons, and a newsreel. There were a host of theaters within walking distance, but the Oriental was the epitome of movie theaters made even more inviting by our ability to sneak in without having to shell out the dime. Talk about grand theft! We also walked to the Oakland, the Downer, the East, and the Peerless theaters. Much like the tavern population, Milwaukee was blessed with a plethora of movie houses. The Oakland Theater was eventually turned into the Fred Miller Theater that brought live performances by famous stars to our beloved East Side.

We played sheepshead (a card game peculiar to Wisconsinites) in Riverside Park. We smoked, got loud, and we attempted to convey to passers-by that we had grown up and were firmly ensconced on the threshold of adulthood.

It was a “gas” hanging out on busy street corners like Oakland and Locust or Farwell and North. Adorned in leather or suede jackets and our hair sporting a ducktail or pompadour, our pants were pegged, and our shoes—of course they were blue and they were suede. We were unquestionably the kings and the queens of the corners.

We hung out in the Oriental and Willis’s Drugs, Ma Fischer’s, Plotkin’s Deli, the Economy and Sherman’s Drug Stores, Scotty’s Garage, Bensinger’s Bowling Alley, Jim’s Candy Store,

Drueschkies, Dan's Chicken Pie, Weber's Candy Store, the Pig'n Whistle in Shorewood, and our headquarters, Francesca's Pizza House, where we ruled the roost. Campanelli's Grocery store was another favorite because we could swipe bottles of beer from their cooler without getting caught.

There were times when a group of us would purchase a quart of beer and stick a straw in it before passing it around. If you ever sipped beer through a straw, you'd realize that you'd get a very fast buzz.

When we got a little older, we frequented bars, making Axels our most favored of haunts. There were others but Axels became special to all of us and remains so today. During the early sixties we gave birth to the Hippie Era and our neighborhood, like many others, housed a Hippie coffee joint where we could hang out, snap our fingers, smoke, and listen to beatnik poetry. Our place was named the Purple Eye. We are talkin' *cool*.

EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT WE ATTENDED dances at Plymouth Church ... most often after one of our high school football games. We also had sock hops at school, but get this, none of our gang ever danced because it simply wasn't cool—and not many of us could dance. The girls seemed to be satisfied dancing with each other, and we made fun of any guy who danced, which was all the more reason for the guys to avoid it or else suffer our wrath.

On Sundays in the mid-fifties, we traveled up Wisconsin Avenue to the Eagles Club to listen to the big bands perform: Stars like Stan Kenton, Tommy Dorsey, Ray Anthony, and among many others, Ralph Marterie. The girls continued dancing with each other.

We looked forward to Saturday evenings, which was our special

night out and we would dress up and meet at the Oriental Drugs. We purchased a wedding card, pitched in, and placed a crispy five-dollar bill inside. We addressed it, *To the Happy Couple*, and signed it, *Your Old Friends*. Then we'd select from our list of favorites, Century Hall, the Polish Falcons, Pilgrim Hall, or Wontachs, the hall we planned to "crash" that particular evening. Our little scheme was never discovered and we regularly found ourselves eating and drinking ourselves silly at countless weddings. To this date, we continue to consider ourselves as the original wedding crashers.

Chapter Four

**“The love of a family
is life’s greatest blessing.”**

Dr. Seuss

If we were to systematically or even arbitrarily place all of our parents in a blender and turn the switch to mix, the end result would amount to a two-parent household. Of course, there were exceptions to the rule, but back in the 40s and 50s divorce was simply not an option or a way out as it is today.

The home would be of the Democratic persuasion while our parents considered it not only an honor, but also their duty to vote. FDR and Harry Truman had absolutely no trouble winning the election on Milwaukee’s East Side. The designated polling places were tacked on telephone poles all around the neighborhood. They included each eligible voter’s name and exactly where they were supposed to vote.

Dad was the breadwinner, while mom had complete and absolute control of the household. Dad considered himself the boss but he lacked the fortitude to lay claim to the title in mom’s presence. How could he? After all, mom was the budget master, did the shopping, cooking, sewing, and was known to everyone as the Dean of Discipline.

Our mothers were strong and they were resourceful and like a mother bear, she was protective of her cubs. She’d growl at, and if necessary, claw anyone dumb enough to mess with her family. Mom proudly wore the crown of matriarch.

Growing up on Milwaukee’s east side, I cannot for the life of me recall a mother that worked outside of the home. Let’s face it, with

her workload and job description, a nine to five job would have seemed more like a vacation than anything. I am powerless to establish the role of our mothers and their impact on our lives. They were brilliant. They were the wisest of sages. I wonder if they had the options that today's mothers have, would their choices—their roles be different? When their curtains were going down, I hope that our mothers realized their importance and the bearing that their presence had on each of us. I know that every time I came home it was joy and it was a comfort to find my mother there. Many of today's youngsters come home and find it empty because their mother is working.

Our dads had a special relationship with alcohol while mom had the movies. The incredible number of neighborhood bars like Axels, Eberhardts, the Bellview Gardens, and Kalts became dad's recreational headquarter and some opted to drink at home. Meanwhile, the Oriental, the East, and the Oakland Theater became our mother's hangout.

I am confident that every neighborhood in Milwaukee had a citizen or citizens deservedly wearing the title of *the local drunk*. Ours was special because we had three of them. They single-handedly kept the Blatz, Miller, Pabst, and Schlitz Breweries in business.

They were harmless, out of control, and yet they provided us with a memory book full of laughs. Two of them at one time ran for the office of our local alderman and each received a single vote. One vote each! Not even their wives voted for them.

On a hot summer evening the three of them were sitting on a curb off of Bartlett and Park, because they were too drunk to stand. They were arguing politics directly across the street from the fire station, when old Joe stood up and began to wave his arms

about in order to get his point across. Surprisingly he didn't fall, but his pants sure did, all the way down to his ankles. All those within shouting distance could see that Joe wasn't wearing underwear.

He didn't seem to notice his nudity because he kept waving his arms about. The firemen and all of the witness were nothing short of hysterical and their laughter wakened old Joe to the fact that something was causing all that laughter, and that something was he. So he tried to bring his pants back up and lost his balance, stumbling all over Bartlett and Park with his family jewels just a blowin' in the wind.

When Joe finally retrieved his slacks and had them in their rightful position, he faced his audience and bowed like an actor who had just performed on the Broadway stage. The laughter then turned to applause for the king of our neighborhood luses.

Most of our homes worshipped at a Catholic Church while a lesser number were card carrying Lutherans. Other than Christmas or Easter, worshipping was not particularly a family gathering.

As good Catholic children we were expected to attend confession on Saturday and mass on Sunday. If we didn't make it to church, we were led to believe that we were going to end up in Purgatory, which was that limbo state somewhere between heaven and hell. We always feared that it was closer to hell. It never dawned on us to question our parents about their record of poor church attendance.

Like obedient little Christians we journeyed over to St. Pete's every Saturday afternoon to receive our weekly dose of penance for a wide assortment of sins. From within the confines of the small and secretive confessional, the priest administered his reparation

to us.

When we met outside the sanctuary we compared notes, and the one with the greatest number of Hail Marys and Our Fathers was unceremoniously declared the *Sinner of the Week*.

Church brought many new friends together as we took classes together for our Holy Communion and Confirmation. A big allure was the Newman Club and CYO sports with its basketball league and annual track meet held at Marquette Stadium.

A family vacation was more than rare. We account for this oddity because a family automobile was uncommon to most households. The family car was as rare as a bank account at the East Side Federal or the First Wisconsin Bank. The garages behind practically every home became the storage place for countless items, but seldom included the likes of an automobile. In fact, few of our parents possessed a State of Wisconsin driver's license.

Only through the benevolence of a thoughtful, car-owning neighbor, would we escape from the rigors and the smog filled skies of city life. An occasional ride out to Silver Lake or one of Wisconsin's countless lakes was the only semblance we had of a vacation. Summer camps were for the rich kids from Whitefish Bay, Shorewood, and our classmates that lived above Downer Avenue.

As kids it was a vacation when we would take the bus or streetcar out to the Zoo in Washington Park. Monkey Island was the choice of most us as we giggled and smiled over the antics of the colony of monkeys that entertained us by running amok around their island protected by a moat. Years later it would be Samson, the gigantic silverback gorilla who won the hearts of Milwaukeeans.

For those of us still in control of the faculties and memories there was a phenomenon known as the Victory Garden. It was a patriotic duty to have a Victory Garden; besides, it saved us money and fewer trips down to Schwartz's or Retzer's Grocery Stores. Dad planted and weeded colorful rows of radishes, carrots, beans, tomatoes, and rhubarb. He held his chest high over his *green thumb* and his bountiful garden behind our home. However, there were homes in the neighborhood where mom was the bona-fide farmer.

Dads playing catch with their sons was rare. Looking back, dad wasn't much of a role model. He worked and he drank and he gardened, not a great legacy. Oh, he loved us, but he rarely expressed it. By today's standards we were shortchanged, but back then it was the only way.

Tom Flynn tells us a delightful story about his mother, perhaps one of the brightest stories and lessons in parenting you'll ever hear.

"My mother Helen was a stay-at-home 24/7 mom who ran things in our family. She was a wonderful mother and ran a safe, clean home with a firm hand. I loved her dearly and still do though she left the world in 1996. She taught me much and loved my three brothers and myself unconditionally. I never doubted that for a moment."

"She took me aside once for a serious conversation in which she informed me that, 'nobody in this world was any better than I was. Not the president nor the Pope, or anybody else.' Letting that simmer with me for a couple of minutes, she then informed me that likewise, 'I am not better than anyone else.' Wow! I don't know where that came from, but it took root in my bone marrow and I believe it to this day. It was exactly what I needed to know at

that moment in my life.”

Moms occasionally attended our activities and were always active in the PTA at our schools. They were strong, protective, and they were the glue that kept our families together. Mothers taught their daughters how to cook and bake those delicious recipes handed down from generation to generation. The eastside girls learned to sew and knit and proudly wore their knitted caps and scarves when the Wisconsin freeze set in. Our mothers were our role models.

John Hanley’s daughter, Laura, was a young girl of five or six when they lived on the 2700 block of Oakland Avenue. An alley separated them from their neighbors to the west on Bartlett Avenue. Directly behind their home was the Barron residence. Each morning Laura pleaded with her mother to let her go across the alley to spend time with Mrs. Barron as she worked in her garden.

It became a ritual for the young girl to join Mrs. Barron as she shared with her the ins and the outs of gardening. They talked, they got their hands dirty, and Laura would go home much smarter and with a flower in hand. Forty years later those fond memories linger with Laura who has her own special garden and a special fondness for nature thanks to the kindness and the mentoring of Mrs. Barron.

Chapter Five

**“My momma done told me
When I was in kneepants
My momma done told me ...son!
*Ella Fitzgerald, et.al.***

We are all familiar with parents that go to extremes to place their children in some special school that they feel is superior to all others. They lie, they cheat, and they even have their child bused or have them commute to this mystical school that will ensure them of a better education and a step up on the competition. A lot of times it's justified and a definite advantage.

Such was a case of the Flynn boys, John and Ed (there were three others that we won't mention). The boys came from the small agrarian town of Eden that is just outside of Fond du Lac and about forty some miles north of Milwaukee. Their father worked for the railroad and he saw an opportunity that he just had to act on, but it meant that the boys would have to sacrifice.

Before the sun came up in the morning John and Ed accompanied their father down to the railroad yard and hopped aboard the train heading to Milwaukee. Back then, this was 1926 to 1928, the distance was practically unreachable. The elder Flynn made them comfortable, saw to it that they did their book work, and delivered his boys to Milwaukee five days a week.

The train screeched to a stop on Locust Street, just west of Newhall Street. There were two sets of stairs under the Locust overpass that the boys ran up and found themselves a few feet from the entrance of their new high school—Riverside. John and Ed Flynn were the masters of commuting and eventually made

something of themselves. John became a City of Milwaukee Fireman and Ed became a Milwaukee Police officer.

THE YEAR WAS 1939, the time when the nation was getting back on its feet from the Great Depression, and the onset of WWII was about to further test our fortitude and our patriotism.

A panicking Marge Hanley was screaming at the woman on her party line. Back in those days different households shared telephone lines—called *party lines*, “Get off the line! I am trying to call the police department to report my missing son.”

Before the woman got off the line the doorbell rang at the Newhall Street residence. It was a friend of Marge’s younger brother, Bob, and holding onto his hand was little Jimmy still in his pajamas—the missing child.

The story began to unfold. Jimmy was put down for his late morning nap while Marge did the family laundry in the basement before hanging the clean, wet clothes on the line in the backyard of the home. While this was going on, little Jimmy surreptitiously climbed out of bed, went down the stairs, out the door, and toddled over to Riverside High School—two blocks away.

The tot found his way up the stairs and into the civics classroom of Mr. Aplin. Little Jimmy caused quite a stir, pajamas and all. One of the students recognized Jimmy and after convincing Mr. Aplin that he knew the little guy, he was given permission to take him home to his frantic mother. Marge was so relieved to see her first born, but this was only the beginning.

Less than six months later Jimmy was missing again, but Marge never realized it this time until her phone rang. It was Pincoo, a little Italian merchant and owner of a popular Ice Cream Shop up on Oakland Avenue—three blocks away.

“Margie, I gotta yo Jemmy here and he ain’t a wearing nothin’ but a his diaper. You gotta come ‘n get ‘em. Hurry!!”

Needless to say, Marge rushed out the door and over to Pincoo’s only to find her wayward son sitting on a stool and making a mess of the vanilla ice cream cone that Pincoo used to silence the teary-eyed Jimmy. That put an end of nap-time on Newhall Street.

Countless times over the years Marge told her mischievous son that when and if he ever became a father it was going to be payback time. The good Lord would surely pay Jim back for the misery he put his mother through. What parent hasn’t echoed those very same words?

Years later Jim returned to Milwaukee between semester break at college—bringing with him his four children. They were staying at Jim’s brother’s home on Oakland Avenue. When the family wakened early one morning, Michael, the precocious two-year-old was nowhere to be found. They searched and searched the large two-story home, but no Michael.

The family took to the streets in hopes of finding the little fella. And after a tedious and worrisome search, Michael was finally discovered a block away in Riverside Park swinging nude on the swing set. He had somehow discarded his diaper and was enjoying himself immensely. This was “the” payback time that Marge often referred to.

Thelma Kamuchey reminds us that the nearby Milwaukee River held great fascination for us since it seemed to have this mystical voice that called out to us.

“One particular March day it beckoned us when Everett, Peter, and I were heading outside to play. Mom’s last words were to stay away from the river.”

“It was strange because that’s exactly where Ev was leading us

despite Peter's repeating the wishes of our mother."

"The thick slabs of ice were breaking up and floating downstream like the rafts in Tom Sawyer. Ev boarded one of the slabs and urged me to join him aboard. The moment I hopped on the trouble began. The block of ice began to tip and both of us fell into the cold, murky water. The weight of my thick winter clothing pulled me under and all that I remembered was Ev pulling me to shore by my braids."

"Peter began to cry, saying how mad our mother was going to be when she found out that we disobeyed her. Everett said we'll just wait awhile because the sun would quickly dry our clothing. Sure it would!"

"On the journey home Ev warned Peter not to say a word to mom about what just happened. We will go into the basement and dry ourselves off next to the furnace."

"Of course Pete ran directly to our mother to tell her, 'We were down at the river and Ev and Thelma fell in.'"

"We assumed that all hell would break loose and if the river didn't take our lives our mother surely would. We waited for mom's presence, all the while trembling. When she came down the basement stairs she was without the strap but had tears cascading down her cheeks. The three of us wept together. To this day I marvel at how our mother held it all together. Her love and her patience were immeasurable."

Otto and Frances Brandenburg emigrated from Germany to America around 1928. The two young Germans were looking for a better life and fate acted lovingly by bringing the two of them together on the same boat that crossed the Atlantic in search of a new life and unfulfilled dreams.

They eventually reunited in Milwaukee, married, and settled

down on the east side of town. Otto became a trusted employee of the Schlitz Brewery, an ideal job for someone of German heritage while Frances took over the household and raised their three sons, Fred, Werner, and Kurt, aka Alan Ladd. The transplanted Europeans and their adopted home of Milwaukee was a perfect match.

The Brandenburg boys developed a work ethic through the urgings of Otto in addition to learning the importance of their German heritage. They spoke only German in their Newhall Street home.

With a countless number of fathers having a drinking problem, Otto Brandenburg, a proud German and an employee of the Schlitz Brewery never drank beer. Talk about irony.

Like so many others, the Brandenburg boys learned to either ride the streetcars or walk everywhere because there was no family car in their garage. Led by Otto, the boys were frequently seen pulling their red coaster wagon up and down the streets of the East side.

According to Fred, they took innumerable trips down to the Third Ward (the produce market in the Italian District) to purchase food supplies in bulk. The Third Ward was a couple of miles from their home. Dad also had them heading to the markets near the current Bradley Center where the Milwaukee Bucks play, also a couple of miles. There the Brandenburgs purchased 100lb. sacks of potatoes, live chickens (soon to be slaughtered in the basement of the Newhall Street home), and gallons of olive oil. They also journeyed over to the Miller Bakery on 8th and North Avenue, more than a couple of miles away, where they stocked up on bread and bakery items.

Otto Brandenburg taught his boys about the importance of hard

work and he taught them how to walk miles and miles while pulling a wagon weighed down with family provisions. You could safely say that they learned humility as well. But the many miles that the boys logged were responsible for getting them into distance running. Both Werner and Fred were standout runners for Riverside High School's track and cross-country teams. In 1953 Fred was crowned as not only the mile champion for the City of Milwaukee, but also the highly coveted state champion.

The Wettstein family lived on Riverside Place. Their residence has subsequently been demolished to make room for the expansion of Riverside High School.

Gordon and Amber Wettstein had five children; Patty, Gil, Penny, and the twins, Ralph and Gordie. Gordon was perhaps the most celebrated men's clothing salesman in the entire city of Milwaukee and he dressed accordingly. A handsome, dashing, and swashbuckling kind of guy, Gordon worked for only the finest of men's clothiers.

Amber was a lovely, articulate, and educated woman that used her guile to keep the family together. She was undoubtedly the strength of the family like so many women from her generation were. Amber had to work especially hard since Gordon, like most men from his generation and neighborhood, had a drinking problem. Gordon always found time to unwind over a few libations after a hectic workday.

Around the corner on Newhall Street (also displaced by the expansion of Riverside High School) the Hanley family had a story of their own.

Eleven-year-old Billy Kamuchey came *calling* for John Hanley. Back in the 40s and 50s you would *call* for your friends. Rarely, if ever, you would walk up the steps to a residence and knock on the

door or ring the bell. Instead, you would *call* for them by standing down on the sidewalk and yelling in the direction of the home, “Call for JOHNNY!” That would get the attention of those inside the residence, and in a moment or two Johnny would come a running.

But John didn’t come to the door that day; instead, it was his father, Lucian. Lucian and Gordon Wettstein had only one thing in common and that was their fondness or dependence on alcohol.

Mr. Hanley was *three sheets to the wind* that day and told Billy, “John is restricted to his room and can’t go out all day,” before slamming the door shut.

Billy found his way to the side of the Hanley home and struggled to put a ladder up to John’s second floor bedroom. He quickly climbed up and rapped on John’s window, waking him from a nap. Together the two stinkers devised a plan, a legendary scheme that has brought fame to the two young rogues.

“Dad, if you don’t let me go out, I’m going to kill myself!”

“Go ahead,” he yelled.

Soon after, John let out a blood-curdling scream, quickly flew down the ladder, and lay on the ground in a highly contorted position. Meanwhile, Billy took down the ladder and hid it out of sight.

Lucian staggered up the sixteen stairs, into the vacant bedroom, before dashing to the open window. Looking down he saw his middle son, his body askew, with every conceivable appearance of being dead.

“Oh John,” he moaned to himself.

“Rob call the ambulance,” he ordered.

But Rob was up to the scam and played along by pretending to call the ambulance. Lucian was beside himself, but remember, he

was drunk. He went downstairs and sat on the couch, a million thoughts crossing his tormented mind.

A few minutes later the doorbell rang. Lucian went to answer, opened the door, and there stood eleven-year-old John Hanley.

“Hi dad,” he uttered as he walked past his father, up the stairs, and into his room. He just pulled off one of the all-time best pranks and not a word was uttered about the incident in the family household.

Jackie Chiamonte fondly recalls living on the east side. Her claim to fame is that she grew up as the only Italian family in a small Polish neighborhood in a large German City, yet everyone seemed to get along until an unfortunate incident occurred back in the summer of ‘50.

Jackie’s father drove her older sister, Mary, over to Tompkin’s Ice Cream Parlor on the corner of North Avenue and Oakland. This was prior to the time that Fred Brandenburg and Bill Clark worked there as soda jerks. Tompkins was a popular hangout and preceded the Frosty Freeze phenomena by a number of years.

It was one of those hot and humid summer nights that made Milwaukee famous when Mr. Chiamonte dropped Mary off to pick up the ice cream, while he waited outside in the family sedan.

It seemed to be taking Mary an inordinate amount of time, and when her dad saw people leaving the store with ice cream; people that entered well after Mary did, he decided to find out what was going on.

Needless to say, he was a bit disturbed to have to turn off the car engine and enter the store, but shit would hit the fan once inside.

Mary was a shy young girl and stood next to the counter waiting patiently. When her father asked her what was taking so long,

Mary replied, “No one is waiting on me.”

The irate father approached the soda jerk demanding to know why his daughter wasn’t being served. The clerk said, “I’ll tell you why buddy, because we don’t serve Wops here. That’s why!”

Without as word, the proud Italian swiftly reached over the counter and directed a powerful blow to what was once a perfect nose on the bigot’s face. The Chiaramontes went without ice cream that summer night and Jackie’s mother had to bail her hubby out of jail, but all of the children were never prouder of their dad. He was their hero

THELMA KAMUCHEY SAYS THAT IT’S not always about us learning from our parents, but how our parents also learn from us. The following happened when Thelma was a young adult, somewhere in her early twenties.

One Saturday morning my mother, brother, and I were sitting at our kitchen table. It was almost noon when our father appeared in the doorway and told my mother to draw his bath before he grumbled some obscenities about how lazy we all were.

When dad emerged from his bath, he was wearing his undershirt and shorts. As he sat down, he asked mom to fix his breakfast. My brother and I sat talking to each other, when dad turned on us and began to criticize us—something he often did.

My brother had enough and he reacted by tossing a glass of water in dad’s face and leapt from the table with dad in hot pursuit. Of course, I was right behind the two of them as my brother flew through the screen door with dad right behind him.

When dad was clearly out on the porch, I slammed the front door and locked it. Now dad was on the front porch in broad daylight clad in his underwear, banging on the front door and

screaming, “Thelma let me in!”

Since it wasn’t working, he jumped off the porch heading for the rear door to our home. Meanwhile her younger brother, observing all of the shenanigans raced to the rear and locked that door. Now dad was really ticked off.

A neighbor across the alley witnessed the entire fiasco and was hysterical with laughter, even falling to the grass to gain a modicum of composure.

So there was our dad screaming about his wife’s rotten kids, in his underwear and locked out of his house. He was doing his best to hide from the peering eyes of the nosy neighbors, but it simply wasn’t working—dad was causing too much of a racket. Our mother finally had enough and gave in by unlocking the door and allowing our embarrassed father entry into our home.

Mom kept her cool as her irate spouse informed her that she had given birth to some “crazy” kids that had no respect for him.

Our mother replied, “Respect is earned, not a given. And maybe you should start showing these crazy kids some respect.”

Things never changed instantaneously; time was needed to break old habits. I do believe that our dad learned from three of his nine children that incredible day on Park Place.

Needless to say, my brother and I were not seen around the house for the remainder of the day.

Marge Romano grew up on the East side. She was the middle child, sandwiched between two brothers. Her Italian parents were strict, but loving and artistically rich and popular in Milwaukee’s Italian community.

Marge graduated from Riverside in the late ’20s and immediately entered the work force during the Depression Era. At Wisconsin Bell she met and soon after married her husband,

Lucian Hanley, a west side guy.

The Hanleys had three boys, Jim, John, and Rob. Marge was intelligent and extremely witty and if she had a flaw, it was her inability to hold back her thoughts and her feelings. She told it like it was, and practically everyone respected that with the exception of her boys who were often embarrassed over Marge's bluntness and candor.

Marge was active in her boy's lives, always encouraging them to do their best and when they happened to disappoint her, when they got in trouble, her love for them never waned.

Marge welcomed the boys' friends into her modest Newhall Street home. Lunchtime at the Hanley's meant a crowd of the boys' friends would rush over from school for a card game of poker or sheepshead while eating their sack lunches.

Along with the card games there would be some rather challenging conversations and debates. Marge went out of her way to correct the improper use of English during her lunchtime sessions with the boys. They took offense when a teacher corrected them, but they didn't seem to mind when Marge did it.

Marge was the president of the Bartlett Avenue PTA and volunteered to work at the school whenever her presence was needed.

Marge bequeathed her passion for reading to each of her sons and many of her grandchildren. But perhaps her greatest of all gifts was her ability to nurture friendships and hold them dear to her soul.

Long after the boys left home, their friends continued to stop by to visit Marge on a regular basis, usually for a game of Scrabble or bridge. Then as the years began to catch up with her, the boys brought her out to California where she could enjoy the weather

and be close to her beloved grandchildren. Nonetheless, Marge was an eastsider through and through.

SALVATORE CINCOTTA, AN ITALIAN IMMIGRANT, was the father of Joe, Dominica (Minnie), Rocco, Tom, and Santo. He was so proud of his family and almost equally as proud of becoming an American. The Cincottas owned their own home on Oakland Avenue and made sure that their children had a good Catholic education. Sal's wife, Rosaria (Sadie), was a stay-at-home mom running the household with expert-like precision.

Sal worked for Maynard Steel, a large foundry on Milwaukee's southside. The Cincotta's, like most families on the eastside, did not own an automobile so they were forced into using public transportation. Each morning Sal would dress up in his best suit, shirt and tie, and the shiniest of shoes en route to his hot and dirty foundry job. It was a pretty good distance from home, which required his transferring streetcars at least once.

Upon his arrival at work, he would do a quick change into his work clothes and when his shift came to an end, he fastidiously dressed up in his Sunday best for the return trip back to Oakland Avenue.

His children offered a couple of explanations for dad's odd practice. You see he was very neat and vain about the impression that others had of him. Another account could be that he didn't want to get on the streetcar in his work clothes and offend other passengers, while a third motive could have been his delightful sense of humor. He decided to play the role of some CEO or attorney and dress up like an important person with an executive's job. After all, he was a proud and successful American.

No one ever caught Salvatore in his little game and we'll let you

be the judge as to why he did it.

ERNA BOLDEWAHN WAS BORN AND raised on a farm in Central Wisconsin near Oshkosh. Her parents, immigrants from Germany like so many others, came to America to find a better life.

Erna met John Kamuchey when he worked for the Chicago Northwestern Railroad, a railroad that cut across portions of the Boldewahn farm. Erna was a quiet sort and was sweet talked by the outgoing railroad man that had an eye for this special farm girl.

They married and in short order, Erna gave birth to nine children; Violet, Elaine, Evelyn, Evangeline, Everett, Marie, Thelma, Peter, and William. They moved south to Milwaukee shortly after the birth of their fourth child.

Like so many farm girls, Mrs. Kamuchey lacked a high school diploma; however, she taught each child countless lessons about life. She stressed and impressed the importance of an education. She frequently said that through your life, many possessions will come and go, but you will never lose that which you have learned. No one will ever be able to take that away from you.

Billy Kamuchey, the youngest in the long line of Kamuchey's and a former Riverside High School quarterback now resides just outside of New York City. One Saturday morning Bill walked over to a local farmer's market that was about to close up for the day.

A sweet, young farm gal working with her mother was in one of those contagious, happy, laughing sort of moods. You were helpless when it came to feeling good by being in her presence.

Billy was shopping for some fresh, plump tomatoes. The young gal tried to get him to buy some squash and zucchini with the tomatoes. Billy told her that he didn't care for any, but the imp

insisted adding, "I'll even throw in a big hug if you buy them."

Billy chuckled and was suddenly reminded of his mother, a side of the matriarch that few people were familiar with. You see Mrs. Kamuchey loved to laugh at silly things, and like Bill's dad said at his wife's funeral, "She was such a sweet and innocent child."

The young teen that Billy stood next to was so trusting that it never occurred to her that maybe he didn't care for a hug, but she persisted, giggled, and rewarded Billy with a special hug. Her smile exposed a rare innocence like that of a child not yet acquainted with life's negative influences. As Billy left, she wished a great day upon him.

When he arrived home, Bill's eyes were drawn to his Shaker wall shelf where he displayed the old scale that his mother used at the farmer's market when she was a teenager living on a farm in Northern Wisconsin, also selling produce there.

He knew his mother was shy and would never offer a stranger a hug, or would she? With a lump in his throat, Billy did indeed have a good day and felt blessed over the delightful incident.

Chapter Six

**“Up in the morning and out to school
The teacher is teaching the Golden Rule
American History and practical math
You’re studying hard and hoping to pass
Working your fingers right down to the bone
And the guy behind you won’t leave you alone ...”**

Chuck Berry 1957

As the unofficial spokespersons for our fellow eastsiders, we feel as though we can safely disclose to you that the majority of us enjoyed going to school day in and day out. We really, really enjoyed it! We were eager learners despite lacking a modicum of what today’s educators term as *focus*.

Like ducks to water, we attacked the ABC’s with fascinating fervor. The same could be said about cursive writing and those delightful stories in reading class about Dick and Jane and Spot. We learned about naps, recess, and that being sent to the cloakroom wasn’t good. We were given lessons in raising our hands, sharing, respecting authority, and most importantly—patriotism.

During our recess periods, like good little soldiers, we marched single file to our generous playground that was home to our treasured Jungle Gym, sand box, ball diamond, and basketball court. It would forever remain our favorite time of the day.

We learned and we played a myriad of games thanks to the efforts of Mr. Zinsmeister who came to our school for an hour or so three times a week. He was charged with involving our growing bodies with much needed physical activity. Steal the bacon, pom-

pom pull away, and musical chairs were a few of the activities that he drilled into thirsty minds.

Another specialist that we were blessed with was Mr. Schaum, our music maestro. He proudly and professionally taught us rhythmic activities and songs that we couldn't wait to share with our families; in fact we dashed home after school eager to divulge to mom our newly learned snippets of the day. Mr. Schaum was a most respected and esteemed of educators. Thirty some years later, clear across the country in California, Jim Hanley's youngest daughter learned to play the piano by following the primer written by the very same Mr. Schaum. Talk about irony!

Each week our mothers gave us a quarter, which we were admonished not to lose, and carefully instructed to place in the hand of our teacher upon arrival at school. A quarter was a big deal back then—a literal bonanza. The money went towards the cost of our weekly supply of milk ... the nourishment we were given immediately after our morning recess.

School was strictly business. The teachers and the principal were given a job to do and this stalwart group of educators never wavered. The teachers adhered to their lesson plans and no one could get them to deviate. Naughty students quickly learned to recognize every nook and cranny in our cloakroom. The beloved Mrs. Reinhardt had a different approach; stinkers were forced to sit on a stool in the corner of the classroom with a dunce cap propped upon our heads.

When pupils were good, they were rewarded with a special duty to perform for the purpose of teaching them how to be responsible citizens. Duties such as winding up the Victorola, cleaning the blackboards, or putting paste on little strips of cardboard for art class. The temptation, along with those curious minds, compelled

them at one time or another to sample and taste the creamy and tempting white paste. They also found themselves chewing on erasers and crayons prior to graduating on to the fingernails.

Then they moved up the scale to earn the title of crossing guards, air raid assistants, cloakroom monitor, inkwell filler, and Mr. Netko's little helper. World War II was going on and they had to practice air raid drills by getting under desks or flying down the fire chute that most of the schools were equipped with. It was like a roller coaster ride; quite a thrill. They had monitors stationed at both ends of the chute three stories up.

Each January and June students were ceremoniously passed on from grade to grade and with each step up, more was expected of them. Reputations seemed to follow them into their new classroom.

Our teachers continuously challenged us, as we drove higher and higher in the pecking order. Our hearts and souls always had sight on reaching the eighth grade, the big prize and rulers of the roost.

In seventh grade we could sense the closeness and for the first time we felt like big shots and began to hold dominion over our underclassmen. After all, that was the way the game was played.

In seventh and eighth grades we attended manual training classes at either Maryland or Hartford Avenue Schools since Bartlett didn't have a wood shop. Meanwhile, the girls took sewing classes. Without a chaperone we traveled solo for the mile or so to either school. I'll tell you in advance that we were not worthy of such blind trust.

Around this time our normal focus on sports slowly gave way to our awareness of the opposite sex. This awareness is equally consuming today some fifty years later.

Chapter Seven

**“School days, school days,
Dear old golden rule days.
Readin’ and ‘ritin’ and ‘rithmetic,
Taught to the tune of the hick’ry stick ...”**

Each step we took in our educational experience seemed better than the last. I asked myself over and over, how could it possibly get any better than elementary school? Learning, forming new friendships, pleasing our parents, this is what life was all about.

We were all fired up about attending school like the big kids did. Our parents never walked or drove us to school, nor were they there at the end of the day to take us home. We knew the way and were expected to do it all on our own, a far cry from today’s practice. Whose fault is it? It would be great if our little story could answer that question.

Kindergarten was step one—a big adjustment for most. It still is today. Kindergarten teachers are from the same mold as those from years gone by. They were kind, gentle, compassionate, and in most cases, they were young.

Jim Hanley was called into the principal’s office one particular Fall day. He was nervous as he wondered what he’d done to deserve such a meeting with Ms. Krebs, the spinster-like leader of Bartlett Avenue. This was not going to be good he thought.

Ms. Krebs immediately put him at rest by directing him to Mrs. McGee’s kindergarten class where his younger brother John was enrolled.

Mrs. McGee met the elder Hanley in the hall and led him to the cloakroom, the only cloakroom in Bartlett that housed a

bathroom. With Kindergartners the bathroom was essential and often used.

Standing in the bathroom was five-year-old John Hanley. He had just experienced a most horrific accident. He wore glasses, blue shorts, a striped shirt, and Buster Brown shoes. He was cute, but he was also pathetic looking due to the caked on sh-t that covered both of John's legs. Mrs. McGee gagged while Jim simply smiled at his little brother.

Mrs. McGee's job description did not include cleaning John and she wasn't about to attempt it, which led Jim to do his best to wipe away the poop. He lacked the ability to restore John's legs to their pristine condition, so Mrs. McGee requested that Jim take his little brother home where his mother could do the cleanup. This was part of her job description.

The two brothers, separated by five years, walked hand and hand that morning to their Newhall Street home. Few words were spoken as the brothers became closer than ever that sunny fall day.

Billy Kamuchey also remembers Mrs. McGee, "She was a grandmother and had an understanding for the simplest needs of children." Everyone loved her because she was dedicated to enhance the lives and the hearts of all of her students.

We actually enjoyed going to the principal's office because the secretary, Mrs. Krueger, was such a sweet and kind person. She always made us feel like family. When we entered Mrs. Krueger's sanctuary, we made every possible attempt to take a peek into the closet next to her desk. This was a larder filled with treasures. There was paste, ink, construction paper, those big thick yellow pencils, pen points, Weekly Readers, and the much sought after Crayola Crayons that we loved so dearly. To this day, my two

favorable colors remain brown and gray.

Mrs. Krueger's husband was an all-American football player who studied at Riverside and eventually Marquette University. Years later when I became a teacher, I learned that the two people you wanted on your side were the principal's secretary and the janitor because they were the two people that made the school run.

Tom Flynn was also a pupil in Mrs. McGee's kindergarten class. Although he marched through a Catholic elementary school, a Catholic high school, and a Catholic university, he did attend Bartlett because Catholic schools didn't provide kindergarten classes.

At the age of four Tom attended the afternoon kindergarten classes at Bartlett and the following year he was scheduled to attend the morning session. Each day Tom walked through Riverside Park on his way to school. Then for some unforeseen reason the Flynn family learned that the beloved Mrs. McGee wouldn't be teaching the morning kindergarten class during Tom's second year. Instead, the dreaded Mrs. Grosskopf (German for *big head*) would lead the class. This didn't sit well with the five-year-old Flynn child (the third eldest of four boys).

About that time, Tom made the closest thing a five-year-old gets to make, an executive decision by abandoning kindergarten class for the verdant hills and playground of Riverside Park. He joined the role of the "school skipper" and would enjoy and hold dear the relationship he forged with the affable Tony "the Parkman" Netzel.

Every morning Tom left home right on schedule, but instead of Bartlett Avenue School, Riverside Park was his destination. That would last until one fateful fall day when Mrs. Flynn happened to be walking her infant son Dennis past with park in his stroller. You guessed it; she spotted her precocious son swinging on the

park's infamous swing set. The set was made legendary by Tom's older brother, Eddie who attempted the impossible—get the swing going so fast that it would make a complete loop over the bar. This gutsy act earned Eddie a charter membership in the Riverside Park Hall of Fame.

Tom's life suddenly passed before his eyes when he realized that his mother spotted him. Busted! But much to his surprise, Helen Flynn wasn't even angry and made the decision that evening that it wasn't necessary for Tommy to attend another kindergarten class.

Like so many youngsters of our era Tom couldn't begin to tell the hours he spent in Riverside Park. He claims to have known and explored every nook and cranny, every bush and every tree. He had a hard time understanding why his father (a police sergeant with the Milwaukee P.D.) warned him about avoiding the restroom in the park. He obviously knew about things that happened in park restrooms ... things that all children were blissfully ignorant about. Nonetheless, Tony the Parkman kept an eye on all of us. Tom Flynn is a retired FBI agent.

IN MISS DIX'S SECOND-GRADE CLASS an antsy Gil Wettstein kept raising his hand. He had to go to the bathroom, number one! Miss Dix ignored Gil's nervousness because most teachers tried to discourage pupils from using the bathroom unless absolutely necessary. In Gil's case it was absolutely necessary, yet Miss Dix didn't see it that way. Teachers considered themselves clairvoyant possessors of this innate ability to see through their students; such was the case with Miss Dix.

She finally yelled at him, "If you have to go so bad do it now!" Not good advice Miss Dix. Thus, Gil dropped his hand and peed all over the floor while a little yellow river began to flow under our

table. Miss Dix showed no emotion as she summoned Mr. Netko, the school's janitor, who quickly arrived at the room along with his trusty mop and bucket. The reliable and efficient custodian swiftly put an end to the flow of the Yellow River.

Pete Kamuchey has memories of Miss Dix that he, too, would love to forget. According to Pete, "Elementary school was not without its trials and tribulations. Somehow, I was dubbed as the class disturber and hardly a month passed without a phone call to my mother from the principal for some infraction."

"In second grade I once again disrupted the class and Miss Dix forced me to sit in the wastebasket under her desk. Everyone in the class laughed and even I thought it comical until my mother heard about it from my sister, Thelma. My mother was furious and called Miss Krebs, the principal, telling her that if any of her teachers thought it acceptable to humiliate any child, especially one of Mrs. Kamuchey's, she had another think coming."

"My mother was a tall woman. Her parents, German immigrants, were a hard-working lot that had respect for everyone and expected the same respect from others."

After all these years I finally concluded that our Miss Dix was not the kind, compassionate teacher that our parents had hoped for. I recall another incident with her. Warren Adameak was just about the nicest and best-behaved guy in school. Well, Warren did something that bothered Miss Dix, who at the time was handing out little pats of the white paste we used for arts and crafts. Without missing a beat Miss Dix walked over to Warren's desk, took one of the pats of paste and rubbed it into his neatly combed head of hair. Talk about angry! Talk about mousse!

A few months later, during one of those frigid subzero days in February, I was alone and off to the side during recess. The first

three grades at Bartlett were always sent to the smaller, “baby” playground for recess. Because of the weather we were all bundled up and had to keep moving about just to stay warm.

I don’t recall where I got the idea: if someone told me to do it, or the teacher told me not to do it, but I did it. One of the steel poles that was used for volleyball or tetherball was calling out to me; “Come over here stupid boy!”

So little Jimmy Hanley walked over to the pole and stuck his tongue to the frigid steel member, which soon developed into a rather intimate affair. You know the routine, but I didn’t, and if I did, it wouldn’t matter because I was invincible. Or so I thought. My tongue stuck to it like a powerful magnet; like super glue. The pole was holding onto the tongue with all of its might.

I wasn’t too concerned with the tongue but I was indeed worried that my peers would detect my folly. My eyes were not able to look and see if anyone was laughing or pointing my way due to the adhering effect of tongue versus the cold pole.

I was pleading within and pulling on the outside. I even tried warming it with a mitten but it wasn’t getting any looser. So rather than being shamed by my classmates I pulled and I yanked until the two finally separated. Whew! That was close and no one witnessed stupid me being stuck to the pole. However, I did leave behind a layer of skin from my tongue, taste buds and all, a reminder of a cold wintry day on the baby playground and a stupid prank.

I wasn’t the only stupid one in the neighborhood. After a day of sledding on Devil’s Hill, Peter Kamuchey stuck his tongue on the metal runner of sled. Oh yeah, it stuck good! Peter had no choice but to walk home holding the sled to his tongue. It was a humiliating journey that ended when he reached home and his

mother poured warm water over the runner, allowing his tongue to be set free. Peter learned a valuable lesson that day—keep your tongue in your mouth,

NOW ENROLLED AT ST. PETER and Paul, Tommy Flynn reflects, “Because two older brothers made a path for me, I had a ‘scouting report’ on the first-grade teacher, Sister Mary Samuella. Basically, it was fear her and watch out or she will rip your head off. Barely five-feet tall, she was the first experience for all entering first-graders. From the very beginning she was perfectly clear about her rules. It was sort of like the Ten Commandments of first grade. The first commandment was when she raised her index finger to her lips and held it there. This meant there must be complete and utter silence, immediately. She also employed ‘the look’ as my children later accused me of using on them.”

“Though I heard a multitude of stories of kids getting their butts whipped by Sister Mary Samuella with a ‘switch’ she concealed in the sleeve of her habit, I never received her ultimate sanction and cannot recall seeing anyone else getting ‘switched.’ She had everyone convinced that she was lethal, which had the effect of a nuclear deterrent.”

IN MISS SPROAT’S THIRD GRADE CLASS, little Jimmy Hanley returned from a trip to the *lavatory*—a new word the students learned in first grade. Miss Sproat’s eagle eye detected that Jimmy’s *barn door* was left open. Not willing to correct the problem, the spinster teacher sent her teary-eyed pupil to Mr. Netko’s office, the man capable of fixing anything and everything.

Mr. Netko’s office was small and filled to the brim with an assortment of tools along with the lingering scent of disinfectant.

“What do we have here,” he asked?

“I can’t close my zipper,” Jimmy responded.

After closing the door, he asked the worried student to take his *trousers* (another word learned in first grade) off.

“Let’s see if we can fix the problem.”

Mr. Netko was an intimidating hulk of a man. He was not only huge; he possessed the face of an over-the-hill fighter. The reason being, he was in fact a retired wrestler and owned a gnarled and broken nose, in addition to a pair of partially cauliflowered ears.

The Milwaukee Journal wrote an article about our Mr. Netko that appeared in the Green Sheet. Remember those? His background was amazing and the story pointed out that he had a second hobby, or better yet, another passion. It was in sharp contrast to his love for wrestling. We were all shocked to learn that Mr. Netko was a renowned concert pianist. With his thick fingers and larger than life hands, Mr. Netko was as much at home with Chopin, Bach, and Mozart as he was with Dick the Bruiser, the Sheik, and Andre the Giant.

“There you go son, put your trousers on, they’re like new again.”

IN MISS REINHARDT’S SECOND GRADE CLASS we were told that our cloakroom was going to be used all day for a special event and that we were to be on our best behavior. I believe the year was 1942 or ’43. We were excited with unknown anticipation.

When we heard loud screams and crying emanating from our cloakroom we shuddered and our anticipation suddenly gave way to fear. What the heck was going on back there?

After the first graders had finished their screaming, Mrs. Reinhardt announced that it was our turn. We trembled, our turn for what? She had us line up in alphabetical order with Warren

Adameak leading our contingency. We weren't exactly thrilled when we looked in the cloakroom and our curious eyes fell upon a series of tables and chairs along with some sort of medical staff—doctors and nurses were scurrying all over the place.

We were about to get *vaccinated*; yet another word was added to our growing vocabulary. They used this scary looking tool that was applied to our left arm and shot some sort of medicine into our systems that would keep us from getting some bad kind of disease (inoculation for small pox).

The vaccination would leave a permanent physical scar along with a more temporary mental reminder of vaccination day in Mrs. Reinhardt's cloakroom. But the one important lesson we learned that day was; it is acceptable for girls to cry, but not boys. From that day on we would never cry in front of other boys and if we ever had to shed a tear or two, we saved it for a darkened theater or the confines of our bedroom.

My mother immediately got involved when I told her that the girl that sat in front of me in class had little bugs jumping in and out of her hair. I imagine that the reason I noticed this was because I loved dipping girl's long locks in my inkwell.

My mother made a hasty call to the principal and for the next couple of days Donna Eberhardt's seat in front of me remained empty. When she returned three days later, she wore a babushka to class. We learned that Donna had something called lice and they had to cut off some of her hair. I wonder if kids still get lice?

All of the students from Bartlett went home for lunch where mothers waited with soup and sandwiches. It usually took ten minutes to get home providing you didn't dilly-dally like Thelma Kamuchey did on a regular basis.

"I was the family dawdler and for a very good reason; the

journey home was fascinating.”

“There were flowers to see and smell, the trees had bark that needed to be inspected for various bugs, and there was always an occasional dog or cat that cried out to be petted.”

“My mother had exhausted all means of punishment and finally told me, ‘If you come home late again the door will be locked and there will be a bowl of milk for you in the back hall.’”

“The next day nothing changed as I once again arrived home late. When I tried opening the door, I found it locked. I could hear my brothers and sisters inside. I tapped on the door and no one acknowledged my presence. I rapped even harder to no avail.”

“I spotted a bowl of milk on the floor and realized that my mother meant business. So I picked it up and slurped it down before heading back to school. I held back the flow of tears by occupying myself on the school playground.”

“The final bell rang and we were all seated at our desks when there was a knock on our classroom door. My teacher answered the door and immediately summoned me into the cloakroom. It was my brother with a sandwich for me wrapped in wax paper. He told me mom wanted me to have it. I wolfed down the sandwich and returned to my desk where I was supposed to learn but my mind was on my beloved mother.”

“When the 3:30 bell rang to signal the end of the school day, I ran all the way home as fast as I could. I was the first to arrive and found my mother in the kitchen removing fresh baked bread from the oven.”

“She never said a word about the lunchtime incident; instead, she took my hand and drew me close to her bosom and hugged me lovingly.”

“Would you like the heel of the bread with some jam?” she

asked.

“That was one of the many small lessons mom taught me; unconditional love.”

IN SEVENTH GRADE WE WERE taking manual training classes at Hartford Avenue School. On our return trip to Bartlett Avenue, we were walking together as a group down Oakland Avenue when a car stopped in front of us. It was our new principal Mr. Schubert who was checking on our progress and our behavior.

Jerry Arnsdorf was showing off for us by smoking a cigarette like it was a big deal. When he saw Mr. Schubert, he quickly swallowed the smoke and stuck the burning cigarette in the cuff of his trousers (all of our slacks had cuffs and they were a good place to hide things).

Mr. Schubert was satisfied that we were behaving ourselves and left us as quickly as he came upon us. Jerry thought that he miraculously escaped trouble, but was he ever wrong.

Absent-minded Jerry completely forgot that there was something concealed in the cuff of his pants and we weren't about to jog his memory. So he smoldered and he burned and like proud soldiers we restrained from laughing ourselves silly until we were about to enter Bartlett Avenue School. We were amazed that Jerry didn't smell the burning fabric, or feel the heat.

Some quietly said, “Someone's burning!” And all hell broke loose. We laughed like hyenas and Jerry gave us his impression of a Whirling Dervish. Jumping and stomping just wouldn't extinguish the fire, so Jerry ran over to the playground's bubbler (the Wisconsin version of a drinking fountain). That did it! However, Jerry lost a large portion of his pant leg and Mr. Schubert learned of his misdeed anyways.

On an alternate year we attended manual training (a fancy reference to wood shop) at Maryland Avenue School that was about a mile and a half in the opposite direction from Hartford. We were once again under the honor system on our trek to and from our home base of Bartlett.

I wish that I could report that we deserved the trust and confidence the powers to be held us to, but we did in fact let them down. Now there were exceptions to this because there were a couple of classmates that possessed more control over their actions than the majority of us did.

On the return to Bartlett leg of the journey we were lured into stopping at Albert Retzer's Grocery Store on Murray Avenue, directly across the street from St. Peter and Paul's. It was a small store, tiny is more like it. Old man Retzer trusted everyone, which made things easy for us. But when his son Freddy was running the store, it was a different story because he didn't trust us one iota ... his eyes were glued to us, and rightfully so. When Freddy was behind the counter, we just kept on walking back to Bartlett.

When Albert was running the store, ten or twelve of us entered together. Let's just say that we were browsing. Sure we were! We were lucky to have a dime between all of us. While one or two would engage Albert in some inane conversation the others were stuffing their pockets with treats from his delectable candy counter. So much for the honor system!

I BELIEVE IT WAS SEVENTH GRADE WHEN a group of us were invited to Milwaukee State Teacher's College—currently known as UWM. Only the fellows went that evening. The girls would go at a later date. The seventh-grade girls of this special elementary school located on the college campus invited us. Our teacher told

us that we would be attending a cotillion. We found out that it meant a dance. Yuck!

We were not dancers, especially Jim Hanley. To say that we were nervous or freaking out would be an understatement. What were we to do? Mom to the rescue! Over the next week my mother and her friends Evelyn and Mary, gave me a crash course in waltzing across a dance floor. I was, I am, and I will always be a klutz. Even Arthur Murray couldn't help me.

Nonetheless, mom and her friends thought that I was ready for the big night out, the dancearama, the cotillion, the most embarrassing night of my life.

We got all dressed up for this festive night out. The dance was held in a small gymnasium on the campus where the hosts had chairs set up all around the perimeter. All of the guys quickly put on a nametag, found a seat, and "parked" themselves. As the small college dance band began to play songs like *Stardust* and *Sentimental Journey*, our hearts beat a boogie-woogie beat. Oh yeah, we were indeed nervous, sweating and on edge.

Out of nowhere I found this pretty young girl standing in front of me.

"Would you care to dance with me," she asked?

"I guess so," I responded.

She held her hand out, which I took in mine and allowed her to lead me to the dance floor. I asked myself if I could do it? Did my mother prepare me for this? Whew, boy I was nervous.

As the song started, I took her in my arms like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. So far so good. Do the box, that step close step routine. Then out of nowhere came a completely unexpected phenomenon at the worst possible time in my life. I had an erection. A stupid hard-on—a boner! Reilly used to say, "What a

revoltin' situation this is." I surely couldn't hide it or take a cold shower. So I sheepishly finished the dance and prayed that she didn't feel my manly protrusion.

When I attended Riverside High School, the very same girl turned up in my homeroom. She never let on, nor did I. As a matter of fact, I never danced a dance until my senior prom. I told my mother that the dance went well and that she did a great job in teaching me the waltz.

IN EIGHTH GRADE THE POWERS TO be at Bartlett decided that it was time for the school to have a student council. Elections were held in the upper classes (grades five thru eight) to select a president, a secretary, and a representative from each grade level. Our beloved Mr. Standke was the faculty representative that led the esteemed group through its opening year. Nominations were held, soon followed by a school-wide election. The election was fixed because the eighth-grade guys strong-armed and coerced their younger and fearful schoolmates to vote for their candidate.

The surprise candidate was Jim Hanley. Was this some sort of joke? You betcha it was! The class clown and troublemaker was lacking the necessary credentials, and if elected, he was sure to disrupt and defile the integrity of the school, which is exactly what his classmates were hoping for.

Well, Jim won a landslide victory and took to the presidency like a duck to water. He was incredible, so incredible that the administration and the faculty marveled over the effect the position had on Jim. No longer a clown or a disruptive influence he ran the student council like an experienced politician initiating a series of programs that freaked everyone out.

His classmates were horribly disappointed and began to

distance themselves from Jim because they had hoped for chaos and got harmony instead. Bartlett Avenue School was a better place indeed.

Jim's self-improvement, his change of character, was short lived. At Riverside High School the following year it was back to square one—the class clown and a major disruption. Jim would not enter the political arena until years later when he ran for student body president in college.

Chapter Eight

**Stand Up And Cheer For The Orange And Black
Sing Out Your Praise For Football and Track
Keep Your Spirit Floating High
Always Do Boys Never Say Die
Let It Be Known Our Glory And Fame
Always To Fight And Honor Her Name
Keep Old East Sides Colors High
Lead Onward to Victory
(Rah-Rah-Rah)**

Oh how we looked forward to high school. The thought of wearing the orange and black still sends chills up and down my spine. Having a locker at school, dates, earning a letter sweater, staying out late, having different teachers for each class, cruising Mitchell Street, and taking showers in gym class. We couldn't wait! You will see that not many of us had learning on our list of priorities ... well not in the top ten anyways.

Some of us never imagined making it past grade school (a Milwaukee reference to elementary), but we did, some in flying colors and some by the skin of their teeth. We were big shots now and we would soon develop attitudes that accompanied our new status in life. I can safely say that many of us were impossible to live with. The crap we put our parents and teachers through will soon be revealed to the world.

Riverside High School was awesome, an inspiration to all of those who crossed its Locust Street threshold each day. The school's traditions and its legacies brought other city schools to their knees. They were green with envy. There was a great deal of

irony in the realization that we never imagined how good we had it.

We were blessed to have so many experienced and skilled teachers that wanted us to succeed. They actually expected us to continue on after high school and receive a college degree and to pursue an honorable profession.

We took classes in Latin, calculus, and civics. We learned to dissect frogs and complex sentences ... and we learned to memorize the periodic chart and Shakespeare sonnets. We learned how to fashion furniture out of a piece of wood and we participated in student government. We were invincible and for those of us still around today, we remain invincible.

Practically every day incoming freshmen received a battery of either physical or verbal abuse. The upper classmen made every conceivable effort to convey the message that the freshman class belonged on the bottom of the totem pole. Most of the abuse suffered came from the last year's freshman class.

It obviously paid to be an athlete and it paid to be bigger than the abuser was. Athletes were frequently spared the indignities others would bear when an old friend and upper classman like Frank Scaffidi or Everett Kamuchey come to their rescue.

Our teachers were sympathetic to our innocence and expertly guided us through our maiden year at Riverside High School. Their assistance was welcome, yet having so many male teachers took a great deal of adjustment since we were so used to spinster-like women. At last we were going to have some role models ... some men to look up to.

We started our day in Homeroom, the gathering place where our teacher got us in the mood for learning and where we said the Pledge of Allegiance each and every day. We had daily

announcements read over the loud speaker during homeroom and we learned that if we were having any sort of difficulty, we could always talk to our homeroom teacher about it. They were great mentors.

Changing classes every period took some adjustment and it served to make our day go faster. Variety is good. Sometimes we had to rush to make it to the next class because the distance between the first and the fourth floor was great, and if you had a gym class, you really had to hurry. Most of the trouble we got into took place between classes and sometimes after school.

We were adept in learning who the best teachers were, as well as those to be avoided at all costs. We discovered and ventured to previously unknown horizons in the motivator's classroom, while we took advantage of the weak and those who lost contact with our needs.

Most of us took college prep courses; classes like advanced algebra, foreign languages, chemistry, and English literature. Did we plan ahead to college? A large number of our friends did, but I never imagined it. No way, not this clown.

We had all sorts of extracurricular activities to choose from at Riverside. All the boys were card-carrying members of the Cavalier Club while the girls belonged to the Camaraderie Club. Most of the girls belonged to GAA (Girls Athletic Association), which was an intramural program and the predecessor to interscholastic girl's athletics. Girl's athletics came too late as far as I'm concerned because we had a group of incredible female athletes that never had the opportunity that today's girls have, and yet they possessed skills superior to many of the guy's.

On the other hand, the boys participated in a highly structured athletic program that we'll exploit in a separate chapter.

There was debate club, drama club, speech club, various foreign language clubs, key club, and student government. I have a difficult time putting any of our friends in these clubs. There was an occasional exception to the rule, but most of us were too occupied with athletics and crashing weddings.

During our school day homework wasn't as important as it seems to be today. Structured into our daily eight to three- thirty schedule, we all had a slot set aside for study hall. This was where the majority of us, when we weren't screwing around, did our homework.

Backpacks were still a thing of the future and we weren't about to carry a bunch of books home every night. Our books rarely left the school grounds. The books remained securely locked in our locker while we did our "thing" in the evenings.

With the absence of cloakrooms, the disobedient high school student would be given a detention and expected to serve time in a classroom after the normal school day came to end. This was yet another opportunity to get homework done but it was not a place where you would have an opportunity to fool around.

We didn't have school counselors like today's modern schools. We never heard of achievement or placement tests; they were non-existent. Instead, concerned teachers and coaches led us in specific directions when they saw something special in us. It wasn't part of their job description; it was simply their calling.

When the school bell rings today, teachers are out of there faster than their pupils. On the other hand, our teachers remained there for hours and hours. If you could only use one word to identify our faculty, they would best be described as *dedicated*.

The same could be said about the staff and the administration. The custodial staff led by Mr. Wally Bruss was top notch and kept

our school clean and safe. Wally was a scruffy old fella and didn't mess around. The secretaries were invisible and stayed completely out of our way, but not their bosses, our school hierarchy. They got to know us pretty good and most of it wasn't good.

Along with our parents, we wore out a worrisome path to the Assistant Principals Office, the man directly in charge of discipline. Mr. Schneck and Mr. Lean were the two assistant principals during our four years at Riverside. They knew us well.

During our high school years we really got into the boy/girl thing ... the end result of our hormone imbalance ... the insatiable allure of the opposite sex ... and the thrill of the unknown. We experienced our first kiss, our first date, and we safely reached first base. It was our age of exploration and our introduction to the marvelous world of love and the bewilderment and confusion that are so much a part of it.

The influence of sex upon our teenage minds is eerily similar to today's effect. The same might be said of our parents and their parents before them. Hard to imagine moms and dads smitten by the bug, but true. There is however a major difference and that centers on the impious word *promiscuity*.

Kids of our generation were in most cases satisfied with kissing and with touching a few parts of the anatomy that were new to us. The actual sexual act was a rarity because most of our parents ingrained in us the importance of waiting 'til we were married. Exceptions? Of course!

In a school of over 2000 pupils, I can't recall a single pregnant girl having to drop out to give birth. The girl that happened to experiment with sex was labeled as promiscuous and not the type you'd care to bring home to mom. There weren't many of them then, yet today the story has shifted 360 degrees. It's

commonplace and it's acceptable behavior.

While the guys were struggling with their hormone explosion, so were the girls. They compared the amount of under-arm hair and those that were more brazen, showed off other hairy growths,

They also turned to the tape measure to see whose chest was growing. A few of the girls lagged a bit; giving cause for the others to chant, "Don't forget what nature has forgotten—you can stuff with cotton."

Chapter Nine

**Fight On For East Sides Glory
Strong Brave And True
Now All Together
Smash Them And Break Through
'Gainst The Line Of Orange
They Can't Prevail
Three Cheers For East Side
To Thee All Hail!
(Rah Rah Rah)**

My first week in high school was an omen of things to come. A few weeks earlier I was sitting in as the president of the Bartlett Avenue Student Council, a rare opportunity for my parents to be proud of their eldest son. And now high school and embarrassment and shame soon to be brought upon a good family name. Week one at Riverside found me suspended from school for the possession of a pass-key to the school's lockers.

I can't rightfully remember where I got the key, who ratted me out, or what I planned on doing with it. Steal schoolbooks? What was I going to do with them, read 'em all? I was on the road to making some pretty awful decisions and poor choices. This was only the beginning.

My mother's first of many journeys inside Mr. Schneck's office would surely not be her last. She never complained and she never let on that I brought shame to the family, which I did. She wasn't happy about it, that's for sure, yet I was her first born and her love for me never lessened because of an indiscretion, or for the series of indiscretions that followed.

Fred Brandenburg arrived at school early one morning and decided on going into his homeroom to get a little homework done. As Fred entered the room, he came face to face with Miss Julia Hammel, a more than generously proportioned woman and a tremendous geography teacher.

Miss Hammel was caught in the act of bending over and pulling up her panties that were located between her ankles on the floor of the classroom when their eyes met. Pretending to be blind and that nothing had really happened; Fred made a quick about-face and hightailed it out the room. As he neared the door, he heard a comment coming from behind him.

“I guess that everyone is going to hear about this!”

JIM HISHMEH TELLS THE STORY about the first day of class when we more or less went through an orientation program of class rules, seating charts, and objectives for the term. This was a civics course taught by Mr. Percy Ashford, a World War I veteran, who was said to have suffered from *shell shock*, and who sported a pair of glasses that were thicker than Coke bottles.

As Jim Hanley was moving around the classroom with other students, Mr. Ashford concluded that Jim was simply too social and asked him to sit down. While Jim was attempting to get back to his assigned seat Mr. Ashford ordered, “Sit down right now!”

So Jim sat down in the closest seat that just happened to be assigned to a fellow female student by the name of Jean Langdon. Jean was left with no choice but to sit in Jim’s assigned seat.

All semester long Mr. Ashford referred to Hanley as Langdon and to Langdon as Hanley. Not only was there a mix up with the names, there was also one with the grades. And since Jean was a

better student, Jim was receiving her grades while poor Jean received Jim's. When the semester ended, and the report cards came out, Jean was in tears because she failed civics. I have no idea how it all ended, but Hanley lucked out with an A in civics, his only A in four years of high school.

During final exams the following semester, Jim Hanley and Thelma Kamuchey just happened to be wandering through the halls together when they happened upon Mr. Ashford's classroom. Jim suggested, "On the count of three, open Mr. Ashford's door and I am going to toss in this large trash can. And be ready to run!"

It went off like clockwork, and we scared the shit out of the entire class taking their civics exam. Loud screams escaped the classroom while Jim and Thelma hightailed it out of there.

MISS BODDEN WAS A BIT of a free spirit. She was our speech and drama teacher and was as close to being a hippie as any member of the Riverside High School faculty. She was born too early to enjoy and cherish the *Peace and Love* era of the '60s.

Our class was performing one of Shakespeare's plays and needed to utilize Miss Bodden's large throne chair for the production. The chair was proud and regal looking; however, it had some straw coming loose under the velvet seat.

Miss Bodden asked two of the bigger students, Rocco Cincotta and Jim Hanley to bring the chair down three floors to Mr. Bruss's office and have the custodian restore the chair.

After being gone for most of the period, Rocco and Jim returned to the classroom carrying the once proud throne in pieces. Cincotta had the arms and the legs and Hanley held what was left of the body that had obviously suffered a mortal blow.

Jokingly Miss Bodden queried if they had thrown the chair down the stairs, which is exactly what the pair had done.

MISS LEWANDOWSKI WAS OUR DRIVER training teacher. She was in her own little world and was often the brunt of jokes and pranks due to her naiveté, her gullibility.

One morning we came to class and found that a substitute teacher was sitting at Miss Lewandowski's desk. This was an invitation to take advantage of the unsuspecting sub and have a fun day.

Early in the period we had three pupils visit our out-of-control class and they were mysteriously clad in blue/gray coveralls. Myron Stamos, Russell Rose, and Angelo Nazares entered the room pushing a large four-wheeled pushcart. They surprisingly looked official to all of us.

Our teacher asked them the purpose of their visit?

Myron replied, "We're the mechanics and we are here to pick up the engine in the rear of the class."

The engine was utilized by Miss Lewandowski to demonstrate the way an auto engine was meant to work. This one would never again work.

The three students gave off the appearance of being official mechanics, labored to place the engine on their cart and quickly exited the classroom, engine in hand and without another word being uttered. Our sub thought it was all legitimate, while we were having a great deal of difficulty restraining ourselves from laughing out loud.

The following day the substitute teacher returned for another day and in the back of our classroom was the purloined engine. It was completely disassembled into hundreds of pieces, nuts, bolts;

the entire motor was now scrap metal. We never found where the young mechanics took the motor apart and we never learned Miss Lewandowski's response to mysterious motor parts in the rear of the classroom.

IT WAS RARE IF ONE of our guys took some gal to the prom or the homecoming dance. That is, with the exception of our senior year when it was more or less the expected thing to do.

The proms were always held in the school gymnasium, making the cost affordable to all students. Today it's a different story, for the cost is up in the hundreds of dollars. A group of gals from the prom committee decorated the gym in line with the theme of the prom, as a school dance band generally provided the music.

The guys were expected to purchase a corsage for their date at Balfantz Florist up on Oakland Avenue. You teamed up with two other couples and crammed yourselves into a single auto. So you had to have someone with a car and a driver's license—believe me there weren't many.

There were no limos and no tuxedos (we wore sport coats without pink carnations). We were expected to take our date out for a special dinner at a special restaurant after the dance was over. By the way, when any band played, *Goodnight Sweetheart*, that meant it was the last dance of the evening.

On prom night in 1952 Everett and Peter Kamuchey and yours truly were playing basketball on the playground, and after we finished playing, we decided to take a walk over to the high school to check out the dance.

There was a row of windows that we could peer in and watch the dancers doing their thing. We yelled at our classmates and I guess that you could say we made fools out of ourselves.

Right next to the windows was the lot where our faculty parked their cars. Peter pointed out Coach Cross's car. It was an older Buick, one of those big black four-door autos with running boards of each side.

We decided to pull a prank on Coach Cross who was our phy. ed. teacher and our football and track coach. He was one of the younger teachers at Riverside. Fortunately for us the doors to the car were open as our devious minds began ticking away.

We decided to put Peter behind the wheel as Everett and I pushed the car downhill in Riverside Park and through the tunnel that the railroad passed over. Once we cleared the tunnel we veered to the right to an area opposite Acorn Hill. This was a slight hill and it was a very woodsy area with trees all over the place.

Everett and I struggled to push the car up the incline while Peter worked his arms steering through the forest of trees. We located an extremely secluded area and decided that was the best possible place to conceal Coach Cross's car.

The three of us laughed all the way home. How in God's name is he going to find his beloved Buick? We returned to the spot the following day and the car was gone and nothing was ever said.

Coach Cross and I became friends well after I graduated due to our mutual fondness for track and field. He chuckled when I brought up prom night. "Yes Jim, I knew that you had to be involved." He was a wonderful guy and he recently passed away, leaving the field of education with one less star.

I WOULD BE REMISS IF I failed to mention some of our really stupid habits. They're so dumb that I don't know if I can present them in a discernible fashion. Number one on the list is the

“gornie.” Some of us were so adept at administering a “gornie” that it frightens me. I proudly admit to being one of the most gifted of “gornie” givers. In my moments of solitude, I ask myself if this is the legacy that I leave my children to rave about?

The scenario was like this; ask a naïve underclassman if he would like to have a “gornie” and nine times out of ten he’d (we never gave a girl a “gornie”) answer in the affirmative. To administer the “gornie” properly you were required to make a fist with your power hand. Then allow the knuckle of your middle finger to leave the group of five, making sure that it juts out from the rest, and above all, it must be rigid.

With deftness of hand, the “gornie” giver aims the jutting knuckle at the forehead of the unsuspecting underclassman and zaps him a good one.

The result is most often a golf ball sized knot on the recipient’s forehead. Bill Clark put Jerry Gruenwald down and out with a perfect “gornie” while Ray Kunda has mental scars from the “gornies” that he received from Jim Hanley.

STEVE CIRA OWNED A CHEERLEADER’S megaphone that we used during the football games to out cheer our cheerleaders. The fans preferred our cheers and the antics that we generated in the bleachers. The cheerleaders were green with envy.

After the games to and from our favorite post-game hangouts, the Pig ‘n Whistle and Plymouth Church, I utilized my perfect siren producing technique with the megaphone to pull over unsuspecting motorists.

It never failed to breed laughter until the evening when I successfully pulled over a couple of plain clothed cops that quickly turned the tables by pulling us over. With a stern warning and a

wink of the eye they sent us on our way without confiscating Steve's orange and black megaphone with the big E on it.

I'm not sure where the "jaw" originated but practically every guy had his own unique version—style. Without any doubts, Jack Dordel was a man among boys when it came to throwing a jaw. The rest of us did our best to emulate the master but came up short in matching his innate gift. He was born with it.

It is next to impossible to explain the technique and the sought after sound. But I can say this with confidence; the two best places in the world to throw a "jaw" was the tunnel in Riverside Park and the tunnel in Hubbard Park, often referred to as the vagina.

Other silly sounds that we mastered were the fart and the foghorn. Each sound is self-explanatory and the fart was by far the most popular among practitioners.

There were two widely used techniques; the cupped hand under the armpit and my favorite and more realistic sounding, the blowing on the palm of one's cupped hand that is expertly placed over the mouth. I performed my technique in classrooms, dances, restaurants, movie theaters, and best of all in Minsky's Burlesque when the strippers assumed some strange position.

MYRON STAMOS TELLS OF THE time during our senior year that he and his sidekick, Russell Rose, both flunked choir and gym and thus missed making the honor roll by the slightest of margins. Myron and Russell were an inseparable pair and lifelong companions until Russ was taken from us.

"During the exams Russ and I broke into the janitor's closet, stealing their coveralls. Wearing the coveralls, we discretely grabbed one of those trash barrels on wheels and a couple of brooms and walked around Riverside as though we were

legitimate janitors.”

“We entered a number of classrooms during the finals, sweeping the floor and emptying the trash in hopes of getting a heads up on our exams. Everything went well until Mr. Suchy caught our sorry butts. He made us an offer we couldn’t refuse. He wouldn’t turn us in if we came back after the finals and cleaned his Bunsen burners and all the other stuff in his science lab. All this and no union scale.”

JUST DAYS BEFORE GRADUATION JIM Hanley was called into Mr. Lean’s office. Mr. Lean was the new Vice Principal in charge of discipline. Already seated in the room was Ms. Henninger, Jim’s English teacher and Mr. Martin, his advisor.

Jim had failed his final exam in American Literature, a class that he needed to pass in order to graduate with his classmates. The three educators convened to discuss Jim’s options, but the main purpose was to convince Ms. Henninger to give Jim another chance to take the exam, pass the class, and get out of Riverside once and for all.

Ms. Henninger was a stubborn old gal with a rigid list of old school principles. She was cajoled, begged, threatened, and even bribed to allow Jim another opportunity, and eventually she relented.

You see this was the third time Jim had taken American Lit; the first time it was Miss Watson that did him in. Jim was rolling along and doing better than average in her class until it abruptly came to end.

Ziggy Zelinski sat two rows away from Jim and handed a note to the girl sitting between the pair to give to Jim. Just as the gal was placing it in Jim’s hand, Miss Watson looked up and said, “Mr.

Hanley bring that to me!"

He obliged and thought nothing of it until the following period when he was summoned to Mr. Schneck's office. "I have some of your artwork Mr. Hanley," said Schneck as he handed the Zelinski note to Jim.

Jim was shocked. The Zelinski note contained a naked likeness of Miss Watson with crude comments strategically attached. We never ratted out a friend, so Jim took the heat from Mr. Schneck and Marge Hanley was summoned to school one more time for her often-suspended son.

Jim failed the course again the next year for insubordination to Mr. Holmes and then the Ms. Henninger incident followed the next semester. Jim was allowed to take the exam again and passed with flying colors, pleasing Mr. Lean because one big pain in the ass pupil was finally out of his hair.

The irony of this tale is this; thirteen years later Jim taught the very same class, American Literature to his own classroom filled with pupils. He vowed to make the class more interesting and enjoyable and he succeeded. He also had a couple of students that were his clones. If they only knew what their teacher was like. Talk about Karma!



John and Marge Romano Hanley in front of their Pleasant Street residence, circa 1914. (Photo#4)



Fourth of July 1940 at Lake Park. **Front Row** Jim, Marge, and John Hanley. Leon and Rollie Casalena in the rear. (Photo #5)



Fred, Curt, Werner, and Mrs. Brandenburg, circa 1939. (Photo #6)



Bartlett Avenue School Kindergarten Class circa 1941. **
(Photo #7, see Appendix)



St. Peter and Paul's Second Grade Class, 1943. **

(Photo #8, See Appendix)



Don & Dick Hayden Downer Ave 1947

Dick and Don Hayden on Downer Avenue in 1947. (Photo #9)

The Kamuczey Clan - 1944, Milwaukee, WI



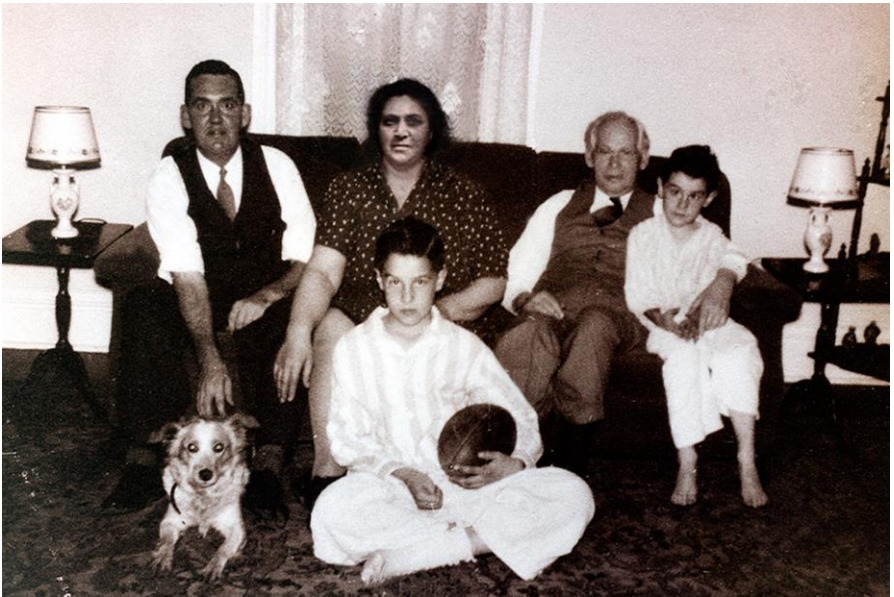
The Kamuczey family in 1944. ** (Photo #10, see Appendix)



Maryland Avenue School, Eighth Grade 1949. ** (Photo #11)



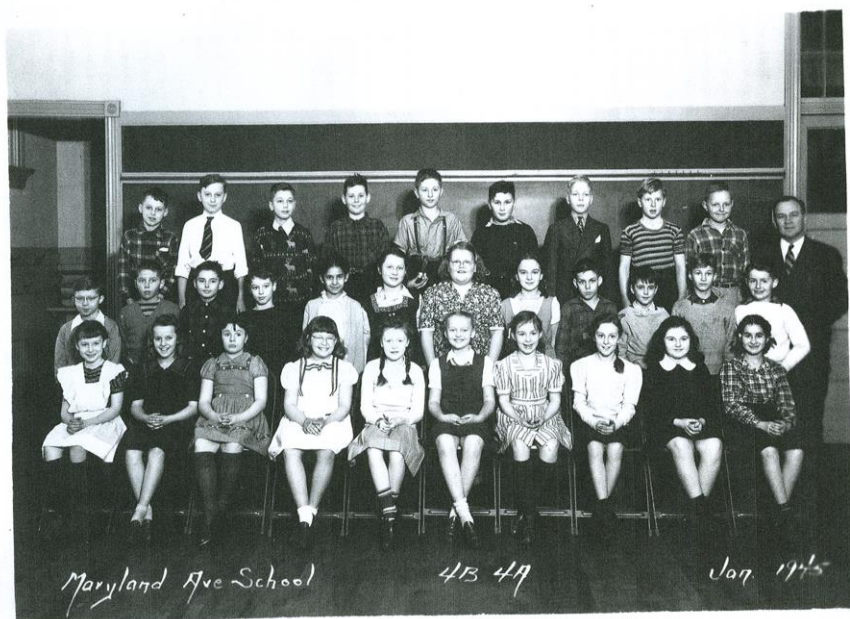
Holy Rosary School First Grade circa 1943. ** (Photo #12)



Lucian Hanley, Frances & Nick Romano, John Hanley. Fluff and Jim Hanley in front. Circa 1943 (Photo #13)



Hartford Avenue School, Safety Cadets, 1949. (Photo #14)



Hayden Buckett Alvin Starr Ron Bond Hoyt Todd Brown Mr. Todd
 Susan Bilgusnik Roland ? Tarantino Pegala Sweeney Brooks Beal(?) Edman ? Rodette
 Besant Podganski Antshchik Andstrom ? Brookkind

Maryland Avenue School, Fourth Grade, 1945. (Photo #15)



Hartford Avenue School, Eighth Grade, 1949. ** (Photo #16)



Fratney Street School, Eighth Grade, 1949. **

(Photo #17, see Appendix)



St. Mary Czechtowa, Eighth Grade, 1951. ** (Photo #18)



Renee Snyder, Judy Andrews, and Kathleen Barron with puppy on
Park and Oakland. Circa 1948.
(Photo #19)



Aggie Snyder, Judy Appleby, Rosie Rothgaber, and Renee Snyder
on Locust Street Bridge, circa 1952.
(Photo #20)



Riverside track stars, Fred Brandenburg, Jim Hishmeh, and Bob George at North Stadium, circa 1952.

(Photo #21)



THE ORIGINAL "Rat Pack"

Lft - Rosie R, Renee Snyder
THELMA K, Judy Andrews

The Rat Pack. Rosie Rothgaber, Renee Snyder, Thelma Kamuchey, and Judy Andrews at Pumping Station wading pool.

1952 (Photo #22)



Holy Communion at St. Peter and Paul with Monsignor Grassier, circa 1957. Paul Pozorski is somewhere in the photo. (Photo #23)

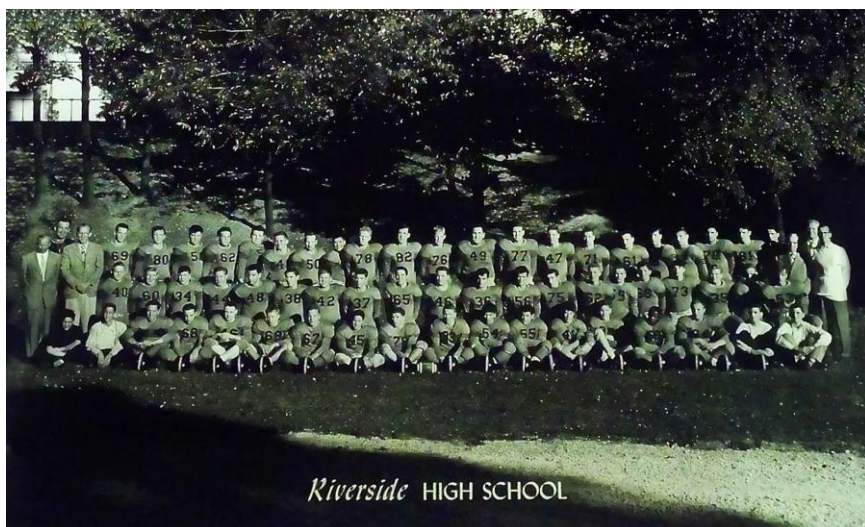


Bartlett Avenue School, Eighth Grade 1954.** (Photo #24)



John and Rob Hanley's joint birthday party, circa 1950. **

(Photo #25, see Appendix)



Riverside High's 1952 football team. Herb Wilson is fourth from the right in front row. (Photo #26)

List Graduates at Riverside Exercises June 16

Riverside high school will graduate 210 pupils at 8 p.m. June 16. The Rev. William Clyde Donald, II, pastor of Bethel church, will speak. Principal Merton S. Lean will present diplomas.

These seniors are scheduled to be graduated:

Cliff V. Ables
David Adams
John A. Adkins
Virginia Andert
Paul J. Arnold
Richard Aschenbach
John J. Avery
Daniel Badalamenti
John Badt
Frances T. Ballsteri
Tom M. Balsam
Donald E. Becker
Robert A. Becker
Kenneth Berger
Winifred Berwick
Steve D. Bichman
Lyle Blumhagen
Barbara Burchardt
James A. Burchardt
Marr Ann Rutie
Bernice J. Brown
Barbara A. Brunhart
Albert O. Burchula
Rosaline Burchula
Richard A. Cambria
Regina M. Camillo
Julia A. Canfield
Pamela Capavilla
Dorothy J. Carroll
Bessie L. Carson
Annette Chalender
Verde Church
Karee L. Clark
Kathleen J. Clayton
Marlene E. Cleary
Phyllis Compennelli
Kay D. Cox
Wynne E. Dapala
David J. DeBoer
Henry J. DeBoer
Uta Debus
Dana Dembowska
Ann Demer
Gwendolyn A. Dentuth
Gerald J. Dettler
Josephine Dehertstein
Susan M. Donohue
Kane A. Drenner
Dana M. Drenner
Bernice F. Driska

Ruth N. M. Drenn
Solomon Drenn
Peter C. Drenn
Gary J. Drenn
Clifford Drenn, Jr.
Janet Drenn
Richard C. Field
John F. Field
Joan Frackel
Gerald Frackel
Janice M. Fritz
Mary E. Fritz
Randy M. Geringer
Carol M. Geringer
Ernest D. Germanotta
Barbara A. Gibson
David G. Goss
Belle K. Gray
Mary L. Gray

Carole R. Rutkowski
Sylvia Rutkowski
Conrad S. Sawinski
Nob Schiffano
James H. Schmitt
Barbara A. Schmitt
Gertie Schumacher
Nancy Jean Seifert
Thomas L. Setzer
Caroline Singer
Edna Ball Smith
Gregory Bell Smith
John Ann M. Snavely
Robert P. Sorenson
Judith Ann Sorel
Arlene Joanne Stock
Vivian Stanislawski
Robert Joyce Stoeck
Beverly A. Stoeck
Barbara Mae Stroka

Mary A. R. Grimm
Arlene A. Grimm
Constance P. Hamelt
James H. Harpell
Carol V. Harpell
La Verne M. Harpell
Barbara A. Jivon
Sylvia L. Jivon
Willard M. Jones
John M. Hirth
Eloise M. Hirth
Maureen B. Jaeger
Rose M. Jankovics
Robert W. Jankovics
Frances A. Kagi
Thomas R. F. Kagi
David W. Kagi
Ronald Kaufman
Ann K. Kemmerer
Masha M. Kent

Nathalie W. Strong
Eugene H. Tumbelton
Thomas Otto Taylor
Margaret Tugener
George W. Tugener
Lloyd H. Thomas
Frances N. Towner
June A. Traka
Eloise M. Tumbelton
Irene K. Tumbelton
Dana Van Worman
Peter Van Worman
James A. Walker
Phillip A. Wanda
James F. Weber
David C. Weiss
James V. Welch
Joan L. Wellman
Edna J. Westphal

Barbara F. Kluck
Barbara A. Koch
James A. Koser
Rose H. Koser
Leon T. Koser
John C. Koser
James K. Koser
John C. Koser
Barbara J. Koser
George J. Koser
Mary J. Koser
Doris J. Koser
Dorothy J. Koser

Roger R. Goss
Joan M. Goss
Harold L. Schlitz
MILITARY SERVICE
Max A. Stroka

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

JUNE CLASS OF 1955

RIVERSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE THE SIXTEENTH

NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE

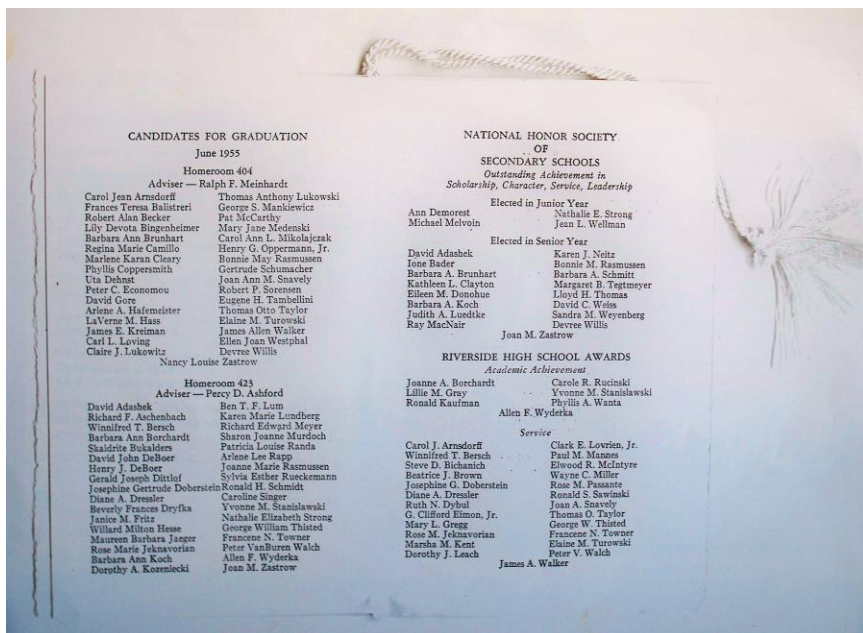
AT EIGHT O'CLOCK

1615 EAST LOCUST STREET

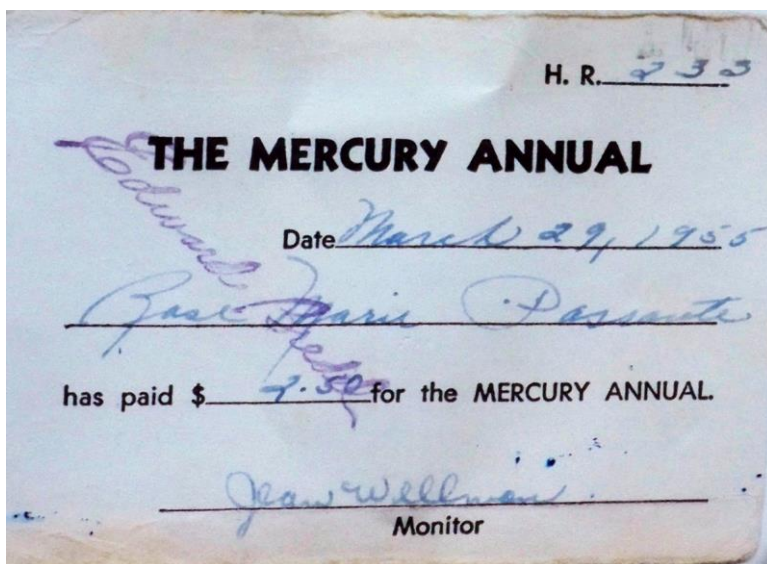
THIS CARD WILL ADMIT ONE PERSON IF PRESENTED BEFORE EIGHT O'CLOCK.

FLOWERS OR GIFTS MAY NOT BE RECEIVED AT THE SCHOOL.

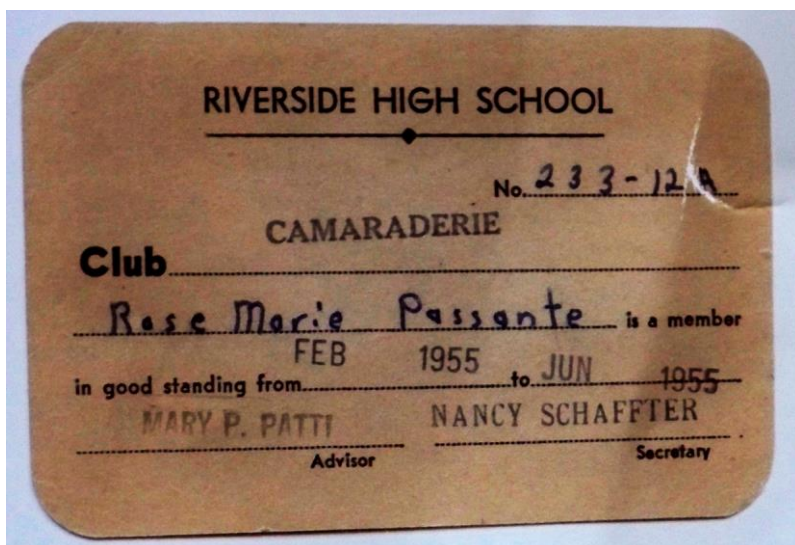
Riverside HS Graduation Announcement, 1955. (Photo #27)



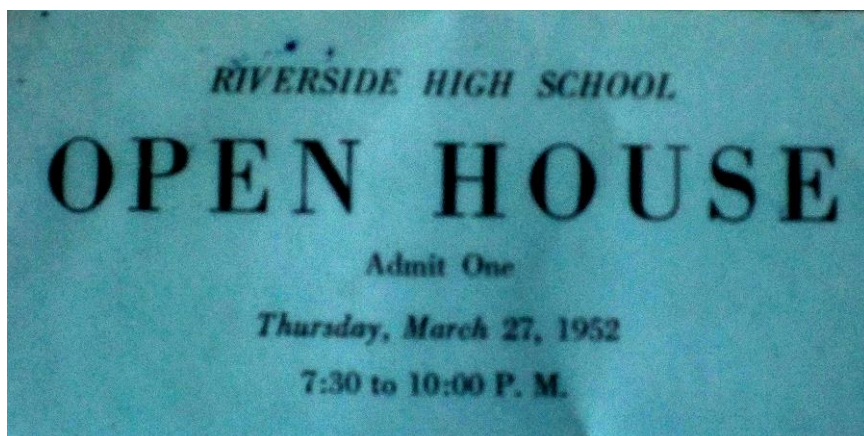
Riverside HS Graduates, 1955. (Photo #28)



Riverside HS Yearbook Receipt. (Photo #29)



Riverside HS Camaraderie Club Membership Card, (Photo #30)



Riverside HS Open House Announcement. (Photo #31)



Maryland Avenue Playground's city softball champs in 1956. **

(Photo #32, see Appendix)



Jim Hanley and daughter Chris on Wisconsin Avenue circa 1961.
(Photo #33)



Don Brier and Rose Marie Pessante's eastside wedding in 1958.

(Photo #34)

**** Denotes ... refer to the Appendix**

Chapter Ten

**Marroo Marroo
Murack Murack
Horay For The Orange
Horay For The Black
Who Who Who Are We?
Riverside High School
Milwaukee**

If it weren't for athletics a whole bunch of us wouldn't have made it through four years of high school, and we would have been in much more than the usual amount of trouble. Sports was our salvation—it was our escape, our ticket through high school, and for some of us it was a free college education.

By tracing our love affair with sports we conceded that it was conceived at one of two venues—either Bartlett Avenue playground or Riverside Park.

Our road to athletic fame started when Mr. Zinsmeister introduced us to the importance of physical activity and the joy of organized games on Bartlett's playground.

We took it a step further when we were old enough to inherit the “ring” in Riverside where we played touch football ‘til the streetlights went on.

Tony the Parkman built a backstop for us over on Acorn Hill so we could play hardball. We played for hours using leather baseballs that had been covered with tape and bats that had screws holding them together. A new bat and a new baseball were mere dreams, but we were content with what we had.

We played a game called strikeout either on Bartlett Playground

or against the wall of the lavatory in Riverside Park. Instead of a hardball we used a tennis ball.

On Acorn Hill we developed new friendships and the love of sport and competition. We also learned to curse there because adults were nowhere to be found ... I guess this was a “guy” thing.

We also swam during the summer months at Gordon or Caesar’s Pool, the river, and at Bradford or McKinley Beaches on the shore of Lake Michigan.

We spent time at the Milwaukee Boys’ Club where we swam nude in their pool, learned to play ping pong, and went on field trips. At Lake Park we had our first love affair with golf at the popular par three course.

Our first taste of organized team sports was in eighth grade when we played basketball in a grade school league with Maryland, Hartford, Milwaukee University School, and Fox Point. We played all of our games in the MUS gym with Everett Kamuchey serving as our coach and Pete Kamuchey as our star player. We captured the league championship for Bartlett Avenue and had our photos in the *Milwaukee Journal* during our game against the league all-stars. This was our first opportunity to play in a gymnasium and not on the playground.

The following year I played CYO basketball for St. Peter and Paul’s. We played our games at Gesu Church located downtown on the campus of Marquette University. I was the only player on our team that didn’t attend St. Pete’s. This was the first time I had an opportunity to compete against black athletes, players from St. Benedict’s, the school that Redd Foxx attended.

With all of these activities in our lives, it’s amazing that we ever found time to get in trouble. I’m sure that my mother asked that very same question over and over again, but we did.

When we reached thirteen, we were eligible to play Stars of Yesterday baseball, a citywide program played on ball diamonds throughout the city. It was designed to both keep us off the streets during the summer and to foster a passion for America's pastime. The program was the brainchild of two former major leaguers, Jack Kloza and Bunny Brief.

Don Hayden was a real baseball fanatic and like many of us he played on a Stars of Yesterday team that was managed by Jim Falvey's dad. He learned to throw a round-house curve and had the good fortune of tossing a no-hitter game. Many of the box scores hit the *Journal* or *Sentinel* and this one unfortunately didn't make either one

At the end of the year there was a nationwide all-star game played at New York's Yankee Stadium where one of us, Cy Burke, was selected to pitch. Cy made us all proud when he entered the game and struck out the side. Cy and I played American Legion ball together for Cudworth Post. Cy was short-changed a bit because there would be no high school baseball in Milwaukee until after we graduated. Cy along with Tom Balestreri, Louie Aveni, Tom and Rocco Cincotta were charter members in the weekly lunch club at the Hanley residence on Newhall Street.

Then came Riverside High School and the mere thought of me, Jimmy Hanley, becoming a Tiger and wearing the orange and black school colors sends chills through my body practically sixty years later.

Riverside had a rich tradition in athletics. So rich that on September 11, 1929 a celebrity visited and spoke to the Riverside boys. It was the Manassa Mauler, heavyweight champion, Jack Dempsey. Jack told the boys, "A good body to a man is like a good foundation to a house. The wind cannot destroy a house with a

good foundation, neither can disease destroy a good body.”

THE LINGERING SCENT OF THE locker room was like nothing else and just the thought of it continues titillating my heart my soul. I have been in countless locker rooms as an athlete and a coach but Riverside’s was like no others. Jocks and socks, shoes and jerseys, helmets and hip pads, all saturated in sweat produced an ambrosial aroma appreciated only by the most athletic of God’s creations.

During one of our first freshman football practices Jim Hishmeh was standing next to Coach Gladden Dunst who was watching Jim Hanley scrambling out to practice. Coach Dunst mumbled that he knew that troublemaker even when he was a pupil at Bartlett Avenue. Dunst said that Hanley was going to cost Riverside at least two entire sets of uniforms along with footballs and other equipment because Hanley was going to abscond with them. Little did Dunst realize that a few days later we had to actually stop practice because Hanley was punting the footballs over the fence and down to the railroad tracks where Don Bader was waiting to collect them. A few of the players convinced little Bader (nicknamed the Midget) to at least toss a couple back so we could resume practice.

I don’t know if other Riverside football players fondly and breathlessly remember running out of the tunnel at North Stadium to ten thousand screaming fans with our award-winning band striking up “Fight For Eastside Glory,” as I do. This is an indelible memory, which is forever etched in deepest hollows of my mind.

In my four years of high school football, we played all of our games in either North or South Stadiums. North Stadium was our most favored since it was close to our campus, and it was

beautiful. We frequently filled the stadium with crowds of 10,000 to 14,000 screaming fans. We won the city championship in 1950 and placed near the top the other three years.

Peter Kamuchey recalls an incident during our senior track season. It was the state qualifying meet at North Stadium. The top three in each event would get to compete in the state track championship the following week in Madison. Jim Hanley was a favorite to win the shot put.

“Jim and I rode a bus over to North Stadium, proudly wearing our orange and black sweat suits with East embroidered across the back. As we got off the bus Jim lit up a cigarette. He never gave it a second thought as we neared the stadium and he continued puffing on his cigarette.”

“Out of nowhere a school administrator from Rufus King High School, John Foti, stopped Jim and said, ‘Follow me son!’ He escorted Jim into the north end of the stadium and ordered him to sit there and not move until his coach was summoned. “

Jim sat alone in the corner of the large stadium until our Coach Pleister finally came to his side.

“What were you thinking,” he asked?

“Your foolish act has forced me to keep you from competing.”

So Jim was off the team and he blew a big opportunity by making a foolish choice. It wouldn’t be his last, not by a long shot.

Jim was so embarrassed over his stupid decision to smoke on the way to the meet and I’m sure that he felt equally horrible for disappointing coach Pleister. However, his track season wasn’t a complete loss because a few weeks later he broke the existing CYO shot put record while competing for St. Pete’s. Coach Pleister’s faith in him never wavered.

OUR FRATERNITY OF ATHLETES NEVER failed in supporting one another. We were each other's number one fan as we cheered for the Bill Inda, Ken Voss, Terry Evans and the Brandenburg boys in track and cross country; Warren Adameak, Pete Kamuchey, and Phil Micholovitz in basketball; the Bezella boys and Dave Holzhauer in swimming; Wayne Cody, Tim Hoyt, and Tony Busateri in tennis; Jay Schwarn, Gary Bratland, and the Whitcomb brothers in golf.

Most of us were diehard jocks. There were even lesser-known sports that we excelled in. For instance, Mike Barron was a finalist in the city base running championship held at the old Borchert Field; Don Bader was a ping pong champion at the boy's club and also a free throw contest winner. Danny Celoni was the city softball-throwing champion and Charlie Weldon was a chess champ. Maryland Avenue Playground's softball team coached by Don Simeth won the all-city tournament with guys like Jimmy and Tommy Flynn, Freddy Gumina, Eddie Ketchum and Funny Walters.

After high school a number of the guys went on to play semi-pro football with Trails End Lodge, the Cudahy Packers, the Racine Raiders, and the West Allis Racers. Guys like Kenny Block, Jim Hanley, Ed Flynn, Dan Celoni, Mike and Brian Barrington, Joe Sutter, Pete Kamuchey, Vince Partipillo and George Frankovis., while Hanley, Flynn, Celoni, Brian Barrington, Warren Adameak, Billy Gee, and Frank Scaffidi all played collegiately.

Tommy Flynn, along with the Micholovitz boys and Pete Kamuchey, played college basketball. Among those on college track teams were Terry Evans, Kenny Voss, Bill Inda, Jim Hanley, Laury LePage, Randy Randa, and Frank Scaffidi,

In the early '60s Jim Hanley, Ralph Wettstein and Carl Rafferty

started the Milwaukee Track Club to provide track and field competition for out of school athletes. It grew beyond their wildest imagination. They held meets at the Lakefront Track and traveled all over the Mid-West competing and proudly representing the City of Milwaukee. Year after year they won the State AAU Championship by beating Marquette and the University of Wisconsin. The majority of the athletes, both men and women, and there were many of them, were eastsiders.

Chapter Eleven

**“Standing on a corner watching all the girls go by
Standing on the corner watching all the girls go by
Brother you don’t know a nicer occupation
Matter of fact, neither do I
Than standing on a corner watching all the girls go by...”**
The Four Lads—1956

Our love affair and the appeal of hangin’ out on the corner all got started up on Oakland and Locust. Through the years we watched businesses come and go, yet nothing could keep us away from the corner because we inherited it. It was ours to enjoy. Then as we grew older, we became obsessively protective of “our” corner.

While standing on the corner, delicious aromas permeated the air, scents that kept bringing us back each day and night for more and more. None was more captivating than the smell that escaped through the cracks of Joe Plotkin’s, a Jewish Deli that served corned beef sandwiches to die for. His jealous competitors have never been able to duplicate them. Joe was an icon throughout the city. Mentioning the name Plotkin’s to an old eastsider today might cause them to uncontrollably salivate and slobber all over the place.

Next to Plotkin’s was Ornstein’s Bakery that polluted Oakland Avenue with its intoxicating scent of fresh baked bread, pies, and sweet rolls. Down the block on Oakland was the Owl Restaurant that grilled burgers with onions sautéed in rich Wisconsin butter. The aroma broadcast an SOS to our stomachs, saying; *come and get me—I’m yours for only a dime.*

From the two bars, Kalts and Axels, the smell of beer lingered

as music and laughter escaped to Oakland Avenue. When we reached the legal age to enter, we too would laugh and would enjoy the music and get tipsy.

A few doors down was the Oakland Theater. Their contribution to the wealth of scents was rich, buttery allure of freshly popped popcorn. Are you getting the picture?

Francesca's Pizza, one of the first pizzerias in Milwaukee came later ... yet the aroma of freshly baked pizza teased and taunted us until we gave in and went inside. Fran, an ageless beauty and her brother, Carl Torre, became our friends, and in their own way acknowledged that we were indeed the kings and queens of the corner.

Our first hangout was the soda fountain at the Economy Drugs. Hub Schmidt, druggist and proprietor, had this awesome fountain with stools you could adjust up and down that was tended to by Clara, a scruffy old gal that made the second-best malted milk shake in the city; the best was found at Weber's Candy Store up on Park and Murray, next to Retzer's Grocery Store.

Across the street from Retzer's on the corner of Murray and Park was Willis's Drugstore, a small store with a soda counter and a magazine rack filled with delicious comic books, the reading material of every young fella.

Laury LePage tells us about an incident that took place inside Willis's one evening. We can only assume that this wasn't isolated.

On Park Place between Oakland and Cambridge stood an eerie sort of home that was owned by the proprietors of the Wisconsin Ice and Coal Company. To say that they were wealthy would be an understatement. Whenever you walked by the home, the daughter, whose name we learned was Margaret spied at us from behind the lace curtains. We dubbed her *the girl in the window*, a

nut, crazy, only because at the time we never heard the term retarded. We didn't know her age because she looked so strange, almost scary looking. Laury thought that she was around twenty when we were kids in grade school.

Well, Laury was in Willis's when Margaret and her dad entered the store. Margaret proceeded to dart around the store, snatching items off the shelf and concealing them in her coat and never saying a word. No one ever heard Margaret utter a word; she simply made sounds. After she had a coat full of stuff, they left the store and on the way out Mr. Willis told the father how much he owed, and dad paid the tab.

IT WAS ONE OF YOUR typical nights in Fran's with twenty or so of our usual friends just hangin' out. We were enjoying each other's company along with Francesca's scrumptious pizza. You know, in all my years of patronizing Fran's I don't recall one instance of anyone ordering anything other than pizza.

A bully, whose name I won't reveal, was picking on one of our smaller friends, Mike Hoyt. This bully was *egging* Mike on and trying to get him to fight, but as he usually did, Mike did his best to avoid a confrontation.

We tried to convince Mike that he could kick the bully's ass, but our urgings fell on deaf ears.

The bully refused to let up, which caused Francesca to ask us to, "... take it outside guys!"

This bully was on Mike's case as soon as we were out on Oakland Avenue. He didn't imagine that he'd gone too far until little Mike suddenly turned on him, *sucker punched* him, and high tailed it down the street. When Mike reached the Badger Paint Store, some two hundred yards away, he slowed down to see if the

bully was chasing him. He came to a sudden stop when he saw the bully on the ground with all of us circled around his motionless, prone body.

When Mike saw this, he was given a second wind and suddenly dashed back to Fran's. He stood over the unconscious jerk, his feet straddling him, and he reached down and grabbed him by the shirt, shaking him and demanding, and in his deepest and meanest voice he screamed, "... get up you son of a bi-ch!" Mike was born again after that incident and the bully never lived it down and was a bully no more.

Bob "Arnie" Poetz was a rotund, Humpty Dumpty and Burl Ives sort of guy. Arnie was happiest when he was eating, and nothing in the world pleased the big fella more than devouring one of Francesca's award-winning pizzas.

Arnie joined me as I sat with our host, Carl Torre, who just brought me a warm, large pizza with anchovies. I asked Bob to help himself. At first, he appeared shy and reticent, but after a second offer Arnie relented and began folding the remnants of a once proud pizza in smaller and smaller sections. Now satisfied, Arnie took two gulping bites and my large pizza disappeared into oblivion.

Arnie would eventually secure his *dream* job, the deliveryman for Francesca's Pizzeria. He would have willingly taken the job without pay because being close to the ambrosial scent of his beloved pizza was pay enough for Bob Poetz. Not surprising, a number of pizzas mysteriously disappeared between Fran's and the point of delivery. I wonder where they went? Bob died young but his legacy lives.

You never knew who you might run into up on Oakland and Locust. Perhaps one of the Micholovitz boys, Sal the Barber, Les,

the octogenarian bartender from Axels, or Nick Anagnos, whose parents owned the tailor shop and shoe repair between the East Side Federal and the Badger Paint Store. Oakland and Locust was our headquarters and would forever remain the pulse of our neighborhood.

As we grew older our headquarters mysteriously shifted down to Farwell and North since we began to develop friendships with schoolmates from the lower east side. I guess this was sort of like a mid-way point and it was a busier spot with five corners to choose from, far more businesses than our old haunt, and much more excitement.

There were at least a half dozen bars on or near the corner. Hooligans, Pat & Sam's, Trier's, Frenchy's, Vitucci's, and Maniaci's were there for your drinking pleasure along with the two bowling alleys, Century Hall and Bensinger's that also served alcohol. We hung out at the Oriental and the Five Point Drugs and the two theatres; the Oriental and the East.

Restaurants were everywhere; Dan's Chicken Pie, Blackie's Pizza, Ma Fischer's, Frenchy's, the Ivanhoe, a Greek restaurant, as well as Tompkin's Ice Cream Parlor. There were a couple of banks, a barbershop, a shoemaker, a furrier, a public library, Schaum's Music, a Woolworth's Five and Dime, and a hardware store. Dr. Dunst, the physician that gave us our sports physicals was also a merchant on North Avenue.

YOU COULD SET YOUR clock each evening to Pat Freeman showing up on Farwell and North at 8:30. Pat walked down Farwell Avenue from his home, arriving first at the Oriental Drugs where he'd purchase a comic book for a dime and a pack of Camel cigarettes for a quarter. He walked south a few doors and entered

Ma Fischer's, ordering a ten-cent cup of coffee. Pat would remain in Fischer's for an hour or two holding court and passing out advice to anyone who'd listen. Then he'd head home and read his comic book before adding it to his voluminous collection.

Pat was also a fixture in the science department of UWM and another of our many east side legends. He passed away a few years back while the regulars from Farwell and North wept.

It's not like we completely ignored our old hangout because Francesca's would always be "our" place and we returned with great regularity. The same could be said about Axels.

A major difference between the two hangouts was the fact that girls began joining us on the corners and in the restaurants each night. That meant we had to be on our best behavior, like no spitting or cursing.

Don Hayden reminded us of Downer Avenue where we also "hung out." Of course, there was the Downer Theater and the Tuxedo, a popular bistro where our very own Ralph Wettstein tended bar until it closed down to make room for Sendik's expansion. It was also home to Kellogg's and the Bellevue Pharmacies, Sendik's, Netzow's Records, Claude's Bike Shop, Nelson's Popcorn Stand, Schwartz's very first bookstore, Downer Variety, Platt's Photography where we had our senior pictures taken, as well as a number of other establishments within the two blocks.

AFTER AN EVENING OUT on the town we often ended up on Brady Street at Glorioso's. No matter what time we stopped we found a number of friends hanging out.

On one particular night or morning we found a celebrity in our midst. Whenever an Italian entertainer performed in Milwaukee,

they would end up at Glorioso's just like we did. This evening it was the singer and former teen idol, Tommy Sands.

We decided to get his goat by playing Nancy Sinatra's one and only hit, *These Boots Are Made For Walking*, repeatedly on Glorioso's jukebox. We did this after learning that Sands had recently been estranged from Nancy, his former wife.

Old man Glorioso came over to our table and pleaded with us to refrain from playing Nancy's big hit. We laughed and told him "tough shit!" And if you even think of turning the jukebox off, we are going to trash your restaurant. So the record went on and on and on until Tommy boy had enough and left Glorioso's.

Chapter Twelve

“The hardest part about growing up is letting go with what you have been accustomed to and moving on with something that you haven’t experienced yet.”

Anonymous

I am at a loss to explain the measure of freedom we had as youngsters. We inherited a rather long parental leash, an unearned luxury that my children would never learn to experience.

We exhibited a sense of exploration by hitchhiking south on Highway 41, ninety miles to the Windy City each summer. This act of independence wasn’t a rare event; it was performed with surprising regularity. Chicago was so cosmopolitan, possessor of a novel amount of mysteries that beckoned to us and wakened our searching teenage minds.

We occasionally found a ride down to Chicago, but most often we made the journey by hitchhiking.

Our favorite of stops was Maxwell Street, famous for the street vendors, their discount shops, and the sexy Gypsy fortunetellers that stood on their porch and cried out for us to come inside for a “good time.”

We purchased suits, fancy ties, fedoras, suspenders, and pegged pants that were accentuated by a spaded pair of blue suede shoes.

We were assuming the role of gangsters, a role we played well. We couldn’t wait to return to our corner of North and Farwell to show off our new duds and personalities. Others may have justifiably looked at us as fools, but if you asked us, we were the coolest of the cool.

We also made a few discrete visits to Minsky's Burlesque in Chicago's Loop. Milwaukee had its own burlesque, the Empress, however, they were pretty strict about allowing minors inside. There were no such restrictions in Chicago.

Whew! We sure witnessed some hot shows at Minsky's, but we never saw those naked treasures of the showgirls. Back then they wore g-strings and pasties and god-forbid that they removed them during one of their acts, those alluring acts of dancing with veils and fans that left us in a state of wonderment and arousal.

We also made trips to Riverview Park, Chicago's version of the State Fair. There were exciting rides, none more so than the world famous and fright challenging roller coaster. We played games, caused trouble, and if we had any money left, we ate some of the delicious foods.

Trips to Wrigley Field and Comiskey Park became regular stops for the Hanleys. I recall an occasion when my mother brought John and me down on the Chicago Northwestern Train to see the Yankees play the White Sox. I got Joe DiMaggio's autograph that day and he didn't charge us back then; none of the athletes did. I often wonder what happened to that little autograph book of mine?

We also went to countless Braves games after they moved to Milwaukee from Boston in the spring of 1953. They were slow to get all of the kinks out of the newly constructed County Stadium, which was a blessing to us because we were able to sneak into all of their games. As the season progressed it got more and more difficult for us to gain entry as the security began to improve.

Our last opportunities to gain entry were climbing in through the restroom windows. One night we had one of those memorable experiences that we still enjoy talking about fifty-five years later.

That evening there were at least six of us climbing in the window and only Jack Costa and Fred Brandenburg remained. Jack was a bit portly and required Fred's assistance ... a boost up and through the window. The moment Jack is in, the cops arrive on the scene and Fred takes off across the parking lot with the police in pursuit. He ran all the way up to Bluemound Road before working his way back to County Stadium. He then jumped a fence, and up a ramp, and was reunited with his buddies.

The poor cops! Unbeknownst to them, Fred was the City and the State mile champion and was capable of running all night and day at a pretty good clip. God only knows when the gendarmes stopped running; perhaps they're still going.

At a later game Werner Brandenburg recalled a bunch of the guys scurrying through the window only to find out that it was the Brooklyn Dodger's locker room. Werner was one of the smaller guys and had to climb up the back of Harvey Moy in order to make it through the window.

Werner was immediately met inside the locker room by a member of the Milwaukee Police Department who grabbed on to the young lad and was about to detain him when Duke Snider and Pee-wee Reese of the Dodgers intervened and told the cop to let the kid go. He obliged and the Dodger locker room immediately burst into a staccato of raucous laughter as a parade of eastsiders followed Werner's entry through the window.

During another Brave's game John Hanley and Billy Kamuchey walked across the bridge in the upper deck to the press box and mezzanine seats. When stopped by an usher, the boys answered the usher's inquiry by telling him one of them was Fred Miller's (owner of the Miller Brewery) grandson and the other his nephew. He let them pass and the boys enjoyed the game from the press

booth.

Pete Kamuchey said it was a hot summer day when Jim Hanley suggested that a bunch of us go over to his house for a game of sheephead. We were probably sophomores at the time, and since Jim's parents weren't home, we decided to have a drink or two. It was there that I was first introduced to Dago Red (Chianti wine).

"I got so drunk that I had to leave and staggered back to the park with my world spinning around in circles. I lay down on the side of a hill, wishing that it would all go away."

"The rest of the gang began yelling at me to get up because my dad was seen coming down the park walkway, and my dad had no tolerance for drinkers. "

"To my surprise my father never said a word. He helped me to my feet and walked me home. This was the first time in my life that dad treated me so considerately. I learned to stay away from alcohol after that incident."

Myron Stamos and Russell Rose were a couple of happy go lucky young rascals hopping and skipping their way over to the old Boy's Club on Jackson Street. Next to the club was the Guardalbene and Amato Funeral Home that catered to the Italian population of Milwaukee. Russell, being an Italian, and his parents knowing the owners, he convinced Myron to stop in and say hi and check the eerie place out.

Mr. Amato was hospitable to the young lads and invited them to go downstairs where they were in the process of preparing a deceased man for a service. They reluctantly agreed as they had labored breathing and goose bumps all over their bodies.

They were standing next to the table that held the dead man where Amato appeared to be putting the dead guy's arm through a suit jacket when suddenly the arm reached out and grabbed

Russell. The boys screamed bloody murder as they hightailed it out of there never to return.

It was Mr. Amato who placed his own arm in the jacket and latched onto Russell, not the corpse. The morticians laughed their asses off as the boys made their hasty exit.

A different time and a different year, Fred and Werner Brandenburg were joined by neighbor, Dick Fields as they returned from a day at the boy's club. They spotted a large apple tree loaded with fruit behind a fence of a property on Cambridge Avenue. Hungry, the trio decided to hop the fence and help themselves to a much-needed snack.

It was a large, fancy home and the boys thought they hit the jackpot, a bonanza, a horn of plenty. Much like Adam, they were about to pluck a couple of apples when shit hit the fan. Out of nowhere, a couple of vicious Dobermans appeared and charged the young fellas, their ears back and their teeth snapping, ready to do some serious damage.

The boys turned and made a mad dash for the fence. Unfortunately for Dick Fields, the Brandenburg boys were gifted runners and reached the fence far in advance of Fields. The dogs pounced upon the lagging Fields and bit him smack dab on his genitals. Although a moment too late, he nonetheless hopped back over the fence and hightailed it all the way home.

The boys later learned that the wealthy homeowner was none other than George Kennan, the one-time US Ambassador to Russia and Yugoslavia, who was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for history as well as a Medal of Freedom. He was the proponent of the political containment of the Soviet Union, the Iron Curtain. He was a key figure in the Cold War and one of Milwaukee's most famous sons. And unbeknownst to most, he had a couple of

vicious dogs protecting his apple tree; just ask Dickie Fields.

Chapter Thirteen

**“I met my little bright-eyed doll down by the riverside
Down by the riverside, down by the riverside
I met my little bright-eyed doll down by the riverside
Down by the riverside ...”**

The Four Lads, 1953

I’m pretty confident that most of us still in control of our faculties recall the first kiss, the first date, the first love, and our first taste of sex. How could we forget?

Experimenting with the opposite sex began to play a bigger and bigger role in our lives. The only thing that I can compare it with is like hitting a home run in the bottom of the ninth in the seventh game of the World Series with the score tied.

Now experimenting for most of us did not include touching all of the bases or going all the way. We were content with much less, like the scent of girl, her softness and her vulnerability, her touch and her feminine allure. I almost forgot her lips and her boobs. Jim Hanley’s first sexual encounter occurred during his sixth year. She was the same age, an adorable brown-eyed girl by the name of Pammy. The first girl in my life, the object of my affection, lived directly across Newhall Street in the four-family apartment building that was also home to David Schwartz (the Schwartz Bookstore) and Fred Tabak (County Supervisor).

Pammy and I were playing together in our den when my little siren from across the street broached the forbidden topic of sex.

“If you show me yours, I’ll show you mine,” she uttered ever so softly yet confidently.

We deviously slipped into the closet and as I was about to show

her the crown jewels, she blurted out, "Wait! Jimmy would it be ok if I went and got my sister?"

How could I refuse? Her sister was a couple of years older and every bit as alluring as Pammy was.

The two beauties returned moments later and the three of us sequestered ourselves in the closet. This was going to be great, a *ménage a trois* and I was only six years old.

I was anxious and made the first move. Their eyes were straining with sexual anticipation while my hands trembled as I clumsily lowered my shorts and then my underwear. Their eyes were focused on one spot and one spot only, my *pee pee*. A simultaneous burst of laughter filled the small closet as Pammy and her sister thought this was the funniest little thing they had ever seen before hastily exiting the closet and running home as fast as their feet would carry them. Their laughter never ebbed. I stood there with my shorts at my ankles and a lump in my throat.

"I've been had," I told myself. There would be a fifteen-year hiatus before I garnered the strength and the fortitude to play the game again.

TOMMY FLYNN WAS IN SEVENTH grade when he had two separate but similar incidents with girls named Susan and Gretchen; both were a year or so older

"For whatever reason the girls kissed me, or they allowed me to kiss them and my seminary ideas flew out the window. I suspect that they were in a learning process and used me for practice. Anyhow, I certainly didn't mind, nor did I protest."

Pete Kamuchey recalls the time a bunch of us were hanging out at the park playing sheepshead. Bill Clark mentioned to all that, "... if you masturbate a lot, you are gonna get white spots all over

your hand.”

Everyone sat in total silence, and one by one every guy there snuck a peek at his hand. Pete still laughs about Clark’s remark today and the guys with those telltale white spots on the palms of their hands.

JIM HANLEY WAS ONE OF those twenty plus year virgins. We talked the talk, but we rarely walked the walk. “My younger brother John lost his virginity well before I joined the ranks. John must have been around fifteen when this gal that had a crush on me came to John with a proposal, a very indecent one.”

I was out of town for a while and this unnamed gal continued to visit our house. She would help my mother and grandmother, but her main purpose for being there was to get close to me. She called John discretely aside one day and made him an offer that he couldn’t refuse.

“John, would you like to have sex with me? The one and only condition is that you must pretend that you’re Jimmy.”

John didn’t really have to think about it because this was one of those no-brainers.

“Okay,” he offered.

The two of them left the house together and crossed the Riverside Place Bridge over to the secluded confines of Acorn Hill. John was filled with excitement and anticipation of that what all young guys dream and fantasize about. John’s friend Sheldon Tabak followed the pair from a safe and undetectable distance. He was going to witness this event come hell or high water.

When they reached the far end of Acorn Hill and were confident that they couldn’t be detected, they undressed and John performed his best Jimmy impersonation. He was so convincing

that he could have won an Oscar for the performance. John was now a man and Jim would wait for another five years or so to duplicate the fete, but not with the same gal.

Hanging out with girls obliged us to take on and develop an entirely new persona, a softer side, a genteel side and one that we weren't at all accustomed to. This brings us to the first girl that I kissed, and believe me when I tell you this was a big-time event in my life. Dodsley was a delicious blonde who turned many a head.

Dodsley was a professional kisser. She was an expert that possessed a knack for exciting me and introducing me to the pleasure and the ecstasy of a simple and quite innocent kiss.

I looked at the kiss as a bonding between a boy and girl. It became a simple pleasure that wakened my sleeping libido and brought a state of euphoria to every cell in my rather large body. Yes indeed, that first kiss was memorable as were those that soon followed.

WHENEVER TOM SAWICKI WANTED to take us for a ride, we chipped in fifty cents, which put enough gas in his car to ride around most of the night. We often drove to the south side and cruised Mitchell Street to pick up chicks. After all, those Mitchell Street babes were much looser than our eastside gals were.

I can't rightfully say what we'd do with a "loose" chick because we never found one. But we succeeded in picking up a few nice girls and drove around and jabbered and kissed and that seemed to satisfy us.

My first real girlfriend appeared to me during the start of my senior year in high school. The word was out that she was interested in me. Me, the class clown and troublemaker? She was a semester behind me in school and her name was Kitty Jach, a tall

slender gal that had no peers as far as I was concerned. I felt completely unworthy of such a treasured beauty.

My memories of Kitty are so vivid, so warm and so tender. I guess it's because she single handedly reshaped my heart and allowed me the opportunity to fall in love with her.

It was 1953 and Kitty became my first love and Jim Hanley was experiencing pure ecstasy for the first time. This scenario was so foreign to me, and to make matters even worse, I was immature and ill equipped to cultivate a boy-girl relationship. My only experience with love was my Grandma Romano or playing football.

I received unfamiliar pleasures simply looking at Kitty. Touching, holding, kissing, enjoying her laughter were icing on love's cake. I found myself daydreaming and doodling her name on my school folders and her image in my heart.

The two of us went through an important stage in our life together. We learned about feelings and sensitivities and the other sex. It was a necessary step in our development and with this came highs and lows, with joy and sorrow. This was perhaps one of my first big lessons in life and I must honestly say that I didn't really learn from it.

It was football season and as a starting senior on the team I was expected to take a date to our annual homecoming dance. Now that Kitty and I were seeing each other this was going to be simple, or would it?

I went out of my way to spend time with her each day at school, and every evening I was a fixture in her home hanging out, hoping that her parents would leave us alone so I could steal a kiss or two. You could safely call her my obsession since I just couldn't get enough of her.

I tried to pose the question countless times, but I didn't have the confidence to come right out and ask, "Kitty would you care to go to the Homecoming Dance with me?" I practiced in my dreams and in front of the mirror, but when the opportunities came up, I continued to chicken out ... I froze.

I lacked the skills and the confidence and then after umpteen times, it finally slipped out and she joyfully accepted. I was high atop cloud nine that momentous day and slept like a child because my nervousness disappeared and my confidence grew. Kitty wondered what took me so long. Taking her to the Senior Prom in the spring was a given.

After graduation we were engaged because it was a pretty serious love that existed between the two of us. Unfortunately, it never worked out because of my immaturity and the possessive and controlling behavior that I began to exhibit. We eventually went our separate ways, which was probably the best choice for both of us. Needless to say, my heart was broken and it would never be the same.

We ran into each other a number of times through the years and discussed mutual friends and our families; small talk for sure. I even had dinner with Kitty and her mother during a trip to Milwaukee with my college team. Each time I saw her the old feelings I had for her resurfaced. Kitty Jach was my first true love. Surprisingly those feelings never changed and Kitty continues to hold a special place in my heart.

Chapter Fourteen

**“Dream as if you’ll live forever.
live as if you’ll die today.”**

James Dean

Milwaukeeans love to party. You name it, throw any kind of party and they’ll all turn up. Milwaukee is the City of Festivals and its residents are affectionately known as the Kings of Tailgating. Holiday celebrations in the Beer Capital rival Rio and New Orleans as “*the*” party town.

At one time our birthday was the biggest day in our life. My two brothers, John and Rob were born on the same day five years apart. Mom told John that Rob was his special present on his fifth birthday. The two of them were always close.

In grade school Valentine’s Day was a biggie. Our mothers would go over to Woolworth’s 5 & 10 to pick up a box of those little valentines that we would pass out and exchange with all of our classmates.

Billy Gee recalls agonizing over what valentine to give to the cutest girl in class and whether a few words of his fondness for her would be appropriate.

On the big day everyone brought their valentines to school in a brown paper bag, carefully placing each classmate’s name on the front of the little white envelope. We’d hurry home after school to show mom our bounty and anxiously open the cards hoping that the cutest gal wrote something of interest to me, but all that was seen on the card was a first and last name and nothing more.

Christmas and Santa, need we say more? Milwaukeeans of my era will fondly remember Gimbles very own Billy the Brownie and

Gimbie and Ellie. We made special trips downtown to Wisconsin Avenue to see them along with the festive window decorations at both Gimbles and the Boston Store.

Afterwards we sought out Santa to convey our dreams and our desires to the jolliest of fellows. He was for six or seven years the real deal, the giver of givers.

For the remainder of the holiday season, we were on our best behavior. The preceding eleven months didn't matter, but during December we became mom's angels.

On Christmas Eve we hurried to bed without having to be told. When we wakened, our house had been transformed into a wonderland. A heavily tinseled tree with red and blue and white lights sat splendidly in the middle of our modest living room with an assortment of colorfully wrapped presents under the boughs.

I always assumed that Santa erected the tree in our living room along with bringing his bag full of toys. Many years later I was surprised to learn that my father purchased the tree from the lot next to Gilbert's Liquor Store on Christmas Eve for fifty-cents. Dad waited for the demand to go down while our tree remained up well into the second week of January.

We must not forget Halloween, which Milwaukeean's called Beggar's Night. It was a biggie and it meant a large stash of candy and goodies if we played our cards right. None of us had fancy costumes like today's kids. Some took an old sheet, put a couple of eyeholes through it and went as ghosts, while others took a burnt cork and rubbed it on our faces and went around the neighborhood as black minstrels.

When we reached our mid-teens, we mysteriously distanced ourselves from being beggars and transformed overnight into party goers. Thelma Kamuchey shares a somewhat typical

Halloween party incident with us.

While attending a party at a friend's home, incoming revelers talked about a raucous party going on a few blocks away that cops had raided, and there were party people jumping out of windows to keep from getting busted. So nosy Thelma and a couple of her chums rushed right over to see it firsthand.

Sure enough, there were some five or six squad cars and an army of kids running helter skelter. Thelma and the girls were wise enough to keep a safe distance in order to witness the fiasco. When they had enough, they decided to leave, and in passing the squad cars the girls thought it would be fun to let the air out of the police vehicles, which they did.

Thelma and the girls left hurriedly and when she arrived back at her original party, her two friends had disappeared. She remained there a while before making her way home.

The following morning a couple of police officers rang the doorbell to the Kamuchey residence. Mrs. Kamuchey answered the door and one of the officers said, "We have reason to believe that your daughter was involved in letting the air out of the tires of some police vehicles last evening."

Mrs. Kamuchey responded, "Well I have six daughters. Which one was it?"

"We don't know her name ma'am, but she was tall and skinny."

"Well, they're all tall and skinny," and without another word being said she closed the door, leaving the baffled cops alone on the porch.

That morning the *Milwaukee Sentinel* carried a story about the wild party on the eastside of town where a number of revelers were taken into custody and some of the hooligans let air out of the police cars. Thelma claims that she was *grounded* for the rest of

her life after that one.

NO DAY IS BIGGER OR more popular to Badgers than the Fourth of July celebration because it's the day that they walk tall, stick out their chests, and tell the world that they're proud as hell to be Americans.

The countless number of parks in the city are enough to make your head spin. And on the Fourth of July each and every one of them are packed full of revelers, picnic goers, and patriots.

Our family has been meeting at the same location in Lake Park for over eighty years. In those eighty years God has looked down on us and cooperated with wonderful weather. A sprinkle may appear here and there but never enough to cancel our special Day of Independence.

Parents, children, grandchildren, and now even great grandchildren have been joyously carrying this special family tradition into the future. It is a legacy we hand down with pride and great pleasure.

When I return home to Milwaukee for the Fourth, all of my friends know exactly where to find Jim Hanley; on the northwest side of Lake Park's famous pavilion.

My zeal and my passion for the Fourth haven't lost any of its luster through a couple of generations. It will remain special and sacred until the day that I die.

The day starts at eight AM when the children gather at the three elementary schools in our extended neighborhood. Bartlett (subsequently razed to make room for senior housing), Hartford, and Maryland were the meeting points. Each of the young marchers from pre-school to high school, along with their parents are supplied with a small American flag provided by the City of

Milwaukee. The tension builds; this is going to be a special day.

An American Legion marching band convenes at Bartlett Avenue School and with the large number of marchers tagging along behind, the music makers play countless Souza numbers as they parade up Newberry Boulevard. They are united on the corner of Maryland and Newberry with both the Maryland and Hartford contingents.

Some of the youthful marchers wear patriotic costumes and others ride tricycles and bicycles; they pull coasters and they push doll buggies that their parents spent most of the night decorating. These are the young patriots that will compete for wondrous prizes in the annual doll and buggy parade. It is the contest my daughter Chris won in 1962 and Joe Sutter's son, Joey the same year.

As soon as the marchers arrive at Lake Park there is a mad dash in the directions of the tables that are set up with ice cream Dixie cups, a delectable dairyland treat for the weary marchers. There is an unlimited supply of the special treats, which prompts a bevy of ice cream hogs to turn up and lurk behind trees and bushes with shopping bags that will be used to collect an inordinate number of the prized treats.

We were all familiar with the parents that urged their little ones to make innumerable return trips to the ice cream tables until their shopping bags were filled to the brim. I had no idea what they planned on doing with all of the Dixie cups they were stashing away. Remember, our freezers were able to hold a handful at best.

The Fourth to some meant *Scarving Dixie Cup Day*, but to the rest of us it was our Independence Day.

Immediately following the great Dixie cup give-away, everyone assembled around the giant flagpole on the park's par three golf course. Uniformed veterans with rifles in hand pulled the triggers

to get things started; it was much less than a twenty-one-gun salute. The band played *My Country 'tis of Thee* with the patriotic Milwaukeeans singing along. As the music ebbed, a politician like our very own, Judge Michael Barron, led the masses in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Doll and Buggy Parade followed as the band simultaneously performed on the stage. By the way, Sam Holdorf, our band and music director at Riverside and one of our most favored and popular teachers usually led the band.

At the conclusion of the children's parade, recreational games for everyone from toddler to adult were conducted in an area adjacent to the lawn bowling courts. Practically every contestant won some sort of prize.

After the games a talent show took center stage with youngsters competing in a variety of musical categories for the coveted prizes in various age groups.

When the talent show ended, it was time to get down to business, picnic time. With a smorgasbord of sausages and cheeses, salads and desserts, and an abundance of beer, the remainder of the day is spent eating, playing cards, walking off the meal and simply reminiscing with friends and relatives.

As soon as the sun descends it's time for the fireworks, the highlight of every Fourth of July. The staccato of booms and bangs echo in unsuspecting ears while the bursts of colors and lights are a treat for tired eyes and serve as our yearly reminder that we live in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Before the mosquitoes eat us alive, we pack up and head homeward. The young ones will dream about parades and fireworks, while the elderly about family and patriotism, and the rest about more and more Dixie cups.

Another special day in Milwaukee is March seventeenth, Saint Patrick's Day. You don't have to be Irish to celebrate and enjoy this special day, but if you are, you have a genetic right to go bonkers. Since my father was Irish, I was granted a lifetime license to rejoice every St. Paddy's Day. Of course, we wore as much green as our wardrobe allowed, and we drank as much green beer and ate as much corned beef and cabbage, as our stomachs would allow.

We had a number of options as to where our celebrating was to take place, but none was more appropriate, more personal, or more fun than Champion's Irish Pub, which is an eastside landmark.

Champion's first bar was located on Murray Avenue just south of St. Pete's and their last was on Bartlett Avenue next to Jankowski's old neighborhood grocery store.

Jimmy Champion, may God bless his soul, was one of us and as Irish as the most magical of leprechauns. A March seventeenth inside Champion's Pub was a night you'd never forget.

Jimmy, rotund and jolly, was the Irish poster guy. He was the proud owner of a personality that won everyone's heart. He loved to sing for his patrons as he plucked out melodies on his trusty guitar. On St. Paddy's Day he was at his best, he shined. *When Irish Eyes Are Smilin'* brought tears to many an eye and put everyone in a festive mood for Ireland's biggest of days.

The pub was jam-packed with bodies and the only thing they felt was good. Besides the songs and the jigs, Jimmy introduced the eastsiders to a greased pig contest. A little pig was oiled and greased before being released in the bar. The he or she that successfully captured and held the piglet off the floor drank free in Champion's until the following St. Paddy's Day. Champion's is

indeed an eastside landmark.

As we grew older New Year's Eve replaced every holiday at or near the top of the list. The older we got, the longer we stayed out. Sometimes we'd stay out all night and rush down to Bradford Beach to see those crazy people in the Milwaukee Polar Bear Club frolic in the freezing water of Lake Michigan. A few of our friends gave it a try, but not this guy. The president of the Polar Bears was Joe Sutter's dad, a Milwaukee cop that frolicked and froze with the best of them.

The first really ethnic celebration in Milwaukee was the Italian Feast. They held it for years just south of Wisconsin Avenue in the old Third Ward. Then when they began developing the area, it was moved over to Cass Street around St. Rita's Parish, and eventually to the Summerfest grounds where it's held today with practically every ethnic celebration you could imagine.

Chapter Fifteen

**“My religion is very simple.
my religion is kindness.”**

The Dalai Lama

Around my eighth birthday and during catechism class at St. Pete’s (short for St. Peter and Paul) I memorized the Hail Mary. Jim Hanley was overfilled with joy, for the fete brought unbridled pleasure to my parents and even more so to my catholic grandparents that had emigrated from Italy.

My memorization skills soon reached uncharted waters when I mastered the Lord’s Prayer and The Act of Contrition weeks later. I was on a roll.

I attended the catechism class at St. Pete’s two days every week. Tommy and Bobby Hintz walked with me from Bartlett to St. Pete’s, as we were released from school early. We were big shots. The catechism class was a prerequisite to our receiving our Holy Communion, our ticket out of hell.

Our teacher was none other than the small, stern, and frightening Sister Mary Samuella. She literally scared the crap out of us public school kids, something that I desperately needed. The rest of the kids were from St. Pete’s and I immediately formed a new circle of friends that would be solidified as I became a card-carrying member of the Newman Club (club for young Catholic boys & girls) and competed in both CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) basketball and track.

When catechism class was completed, we were true blue Catholics and we felt honored to walk down the aisle of the sanctuary to receive our Holy Communion, a procession of

innocence and obedience. The night before, we spent an inordinate amount of time in the close confines of the confessional, pouring out our sins to Fathers Schuster or Grasser. I wonder if priests actually took seminary courses on how to properly conduct confession sessions along with the technique of judging.

It was the last time that I wore knickers and the first time I wore a white shirt and tie. Pammy, my cute little brown-eyed gal from across the street was dressed like a little virgin, all in white. Unfortunately, our relationship never got off the ground due to her demeaning and untimely laughing jag.

TOM FLYNN FONDLY RECALLS THAT, “In those days God was more of an angry God and my early exposure to religion was oriented toward all the things that would assure my going to hell. Using bad language was big on the list, but I had no other effective way of communicating with many of my friends, or solving a disagreement. Disobeying your parents was a no-brainer for God, and I was sure that my choice of studying nature and physics in Riverside Park instead of attending my second year of kindergarten, had cinched the deal for hell. And impure thoughts were a serious sin if you harbored them, instead of banishing them and replacing them with other more wholesome thoughts. It was troublesome as to whether such thoughts had to be confessed to a priest, and it called for a judgment as to whether they were fleeting or you were enjoying them. Imagine having the fate of your immortal soul hanging on such a legal technicality.”

AFTER WE RECEIVED OUR HOLY Communion, we were expected to be regulars in the sanctuary of St. Pete’s every Sunday

and confession on Saturdays. I tried to live up to my family's righteous expectations and succeeded up to a point.

I can't recall mom or dad ever going to church except for a wedding or a funeral. However, I was blessed with the opportunity to accompany my maternal grandfather to church a number of times. We formed a special bond and it was among those cherished memories I continue to hold dear. After the church service the two of us walked down to the Oriental Theater for their Sunday matinee. Grandpa loved movies because it became his classroom, the how and where he mastered the English language despite never losing his enchanting Italian accent.

IT WAS A SATURDAY AND another card game was going on at Hanley's over on Newhall Street. Marge loved playing with the boys and the boys adored Marge.

An elderly and neatly dressed couple came up the steps of the residence and rang the doorbell. One of the guys got up to open the door and the couple meekly entered into the dining area where the card game was going on. Their meekness was a result of the smoking and the gambling that resembled a Las Vegas Casino or better yet, Sodom.

Marge asked, "What can I do for you?"

"Ma'am we're Jehovah Witnesses and we are having our annual baptism in Milwaukee this summer. We anticipate having more of our members attend our event than there are hotel rooms in Milwaukee, so we are hoping that you would be willing to put up a couple of our members for two or three days."

They stood there smiling after finishing their little spiel, waiting for an affirmative answer and hoping they touched a compassionate moment in my mother's heart. They were sweet

and sincere and didn't see it coming, but the card players were waiting on Marge to show her colors.

"I'd love to help you out," she responded.

She added, "I will be more than willing to share my bed with two young, handsome gentlemen from your church." She said it with a straight face mind you.

Without another word, the elderly couple made a quick about face and ran out the door and down the stairs. They disappeared without stopping at another house on our block.

Meanwhile two blocks over at the Flynn house on Oakland Avenue a similar incident occurred. According to Tom Flynn, "A couple of Jehovah's Witnesses rang our doorbell in the middle of a rain storm. After hearing the doorbell, knowing that Mr. Flynn was answering, and then hearing the door slammed, my mom asked my dad who was at the door?"

To which he replied. "Helen I'll be a son of a bitch; there were two guys there in the rain with a message from John the Baptist."

Chapter Sixteen

**“Hi ho hi ho
It’s off to work we go
Hi ho hi ho ...”**
The Seven Dwarfs

We all possessed that genetic hand-me-down, that middle-America trait of “... work hard for your money ...” Providing for your family is that one big part of life and our future that our fathers taught us, and they taught us well. You can be the judge as to whether or not it’s more or less important than playing catch with us.

From a very early age we were expected to contribute our part to the family financial dilemma. A few years earlier families saw their bank accounts disappear among the throes of the Great Depression. The soup lines were still on everyone’s mind and a national welfare program was given birth by FDR. Remember, we were at war; first WWII and a few years later we sent our boys over to Korea. Some of our troops were actually still in high school. And don’t forget that women were stay at home moms. With only one breadwinner in each family, we, the children, were expected to contribute our part to the family kitty.

As little fellas, most of us collected old newspapers for pocket money. We tied the bundles of papers and stacked them on our coaster wagons before bringing them down to Hummel and Downing, a local paper mill, to receive a handful of coins for our labor.

While girls earned money babysitting, the guys had paper routes. There were enough of them to go around because

Milwaukee had two daily newspapers, the morning *Sentinel* and the evening *Journal*.

At the age of twelve I proudly joined the workforce with a *Sentinel* route. We were required by the city of Milwaukee to obtain a permit to work, a requirement for all underage children. After purchasing the route, and a large canvas bag that would hold my papers, I was assigned the route along Bartlett Avenue that stretched from Edgewood all the way south to North Avenue, a distance of some fourteen blocks. At the same time Fred Brandenburg had a *Sentinel* route along Murray Avenue. reaching from Newberry down to North Avenue.

Don Hayden was one of the industrious eastside guys that held both a *Journal* and a *Sentinel* route. He notes, "... the *Sentinel* was easier since it was lighter and we could transport the papers by bicycle. We owned the routes and we bought and sold them. We also had to collect from the customers who paid twenty-eight cents a week. We received a penny for each paper and rarely, if ever a tip. I am not complaining since this was excellent training for those of us who did not know what an allowance was and I believe it's too bad things have changed. But of course, today it's a different world."

Jim Hanley was expected to be up before the crack of dawn and couldn't have done it without his mother literally and physically shaking him out of bed. Once up, he grabbed his bag and rushed over to the *Sentinel* station that was located in the alley across from Bartlett Avenue School. He picked up his papers, folded them, and placed them in his large canvas bag. He was ready for work!

"It was critical that all of my customers had the paper on their porch before the sun came up, which meant I had to hustle. From

Edgewood Avenue, down Bartlett I was a flash of lightning, a regular roadrunner. That's because my mind was set on returning to the alley behind Bartlett Avenue School that not only housed our station, but more importantly, it was the rear entrance to Ornstein's Bakery."

The scent escaping from the predawn bakery was a rare treat to our sense of smell. It was irresistible, intoxicating, and had a way of bringing out the worst in me.

Each morning I lingered and lurked in the darkness outside the bakery door. I was drooling, yet I had to remain patient as I waited for the baker who was dressed in white, to turn his back on me. If he did, I quickly darted inside, purloined a Long John, and was on my way before the act of thievery could be detected.

If I was unable to make my move I had a buffer, an alternate option awaiting me. So I ran through my route and just before I reached North Avenue, I came to my last delivery at Jankowski's family grocery store.

I always arrived moments after the bakery truck dropped off a gigantic bakery box that held a variety of sweet rolls. They were still warm and their fresh baked aroma lingered, making it difficult for me to resist opening the box and absconding with a cherished cruller.

My dastardly act came to an end one dark and early morning. I pried open the box ever so cautiously when a voice broke the morning silence.

"You getta outta da box a you bada boy!"

It was the diminutive Mrs. Buittita from across the street that had been watching me from her upstairs window. She caught me in the act, but it was too dark for her to put the finger on me, so all I could do was take flight. I turned and ran down Bartlett

concealing my paper bag so I couldn't be identified.

After that incident I decided it best to pay Ornstein's baker a nickel for my daily long John or cruller. Sometimes he refused my nickel. Why didn't I think of that in the first place?

We looked forward to snowfall as a blessing because we earned extra money by shoveling our neighbor's sidewalks for fifty-cents. When we got older, we earned more money by working for the City of Milwaukee, earning up to a dollar-fifty an hour.

During our Christmas vacation we allowed girls to tag along as we worked our way up and down Newberry Boulevard entertaining the residents with a medley of Christmas Carols. These were the more generous and affluent neighbors that often invited us into their homes and offered us cups of cocoa and Christmas cookies to go along with the holiday stipend they rewarded us with.

My next job was working at the Economy Drugs up on Oakland Avenue. The owner, Hub Schmidt, was a high school friend of my mother and agreed to take me on. It was not an especially wise decision on Hub's part.

I became the store's "gofer," performing all of the tasks that no one else in the store was willing to do. I stocked shelves, washed glasses and dishes at the soda fountain, and inventoried supplies in the basement. I quit my job as soon as summertime arrived because I was more intent on playing on a baseball team. Hub was disappointed in me and rightfully so. A few years later I was arrested with Snooky Cira for breaking into the store through a basement window.

With a number of our buddies during the summer months, we got up in the wee hours of the morning and took a streetcar to the far south side of Milwaukee where a farmer in a flatbed truck

picked us up. He drove us a few miles further south, delivering us to his farm where we picked beans, corn, tomatoes, and potatoes.

He never once asked us for our work permits, and, boy, did we ever work. We were a humble lot and a few dollars at the end of the day was all we required. I guess you'd be safe in saying that we were the forerunners to the Mexican farm worker.

Fred Brandenburg and Bill Clark worked as a team at Tompkin's Ice Cream Parlor on the corner of Oakland and North. Whenever possible, they treated friends to free ice cream, and afterwards they cleaned up and reused the discarded containers so they could make a little extra money by reselling them.

A number of us set pins at the local bowling alleys ... Bensinger's and Century Hall. This was well before the automatic pin-setting machines were introduced, making it necessary for laborers like us to do it all manually. It was tiring and strenuous work and was normally relegated to winos and miscreants. But to us it was money.

Tiger was the master pinsetter at Bensinger's, also known as the Oriental Lanes. If there was a Pinsetter Hall of Fame, Tiger deservedly belonged among the elite. When he was sober, he could handle four lanes at a time. As kids, we looked to him for pin setting advice and tried to win his admiration. However, he was a horrible drunk and as soon as he had a few extra bucks in his pocket, Tiger went around the corner to Hooligan's for a couple of boilermakers (a shot of whiskey in a beer). He sometimes passed out while setting pins and the scuttlebutt was that Tiger was homeless and slept behind the lanes each evening.

During our summer vacation from high school, I hitchhiked out Tripoli Country Club to work as a golf caddy. It was necessary for me to get up really early because it was quite a distance from home

and the golfers loved getting an early start. I made extra money by carrying two bags at a time. One of the perks was free golf in the afternoon when the members were off the course.

TOM SAWICKI WAS A COUPLE of years older than most of us, but he had a car and that's all he needed to win our friendship and become one of us. Tom's nickname was "Words" because he could not stop talking. He was someone we could always rely upon when we had to go somewhere special.

Tom had a cushy job at the Pabst Brewery near downtown Milwaukee. He was responsible for feeding a large room full of baby chickens seven days a week. I'm not sure what they were fed, perhaps malt or barley or some ingredient that went into the Pabst Blue Ribbon.

We felt lucky when Tom offered to take us to his lab on the weekends. The brewery was usually deserted then and Tom made sure that we paid a visit the massive refrigerator room and poured ourselves a few brewskis. The beer was the best ever probably due to the ideal temperature of the coolers.

Chapter Seventeen

**“The greatness comes not when things
go always good for you. But the greatness comes
when you’re really tested, when you take some
knocks; some disappointments, when
sadness comes.”**

Richard Nixon

I was a master at getting into trouble. In fact, I could easily devote a book to this phase of my formative years that I’d most love to forget. So where the heck do I start?

I was a snowball storming downhill or a runaway horse heading in the wrong direction. I was incapable of stopping the momentum and nothing would bridle me until I reached the bottom.

My mother, actually all of my relatives, suffered the effects of my failure to make the right decisions. There were countless incidents when I brought shame to our good family name, but at the time it never sunk in.

I have repressed so much of my destructive past that my conscious self refuses to acknowledge. I was obliged to rely upon the accounts of friends to learn about many of my evil deeds because they didn’t hide their secrets in the deepest abyss of their minds like I did.

I wore blinders and I was recklessly indestructible on the widened road I traveled. But the road soon began to narrow, bringing me to my knees.

My grade school teachers would be in agreement that Jimmy Hanley was a giant pain in the ass but he was a charmer. With the exception of penmanship, with which I still struggle, my grades

were average. But the other ones, those that that my mother was more concerned with, like deportment, were horrendous. “James is a disruptive force in the classroom,” or, “James can’t sit still at his desk.” This was just the start of something big; the beginning.

I was never suspended from grade school, but there were a few instances of being sent to the principal’s office. The visit was always followed up with the dreaded call home to my parents and my mother’s wrath. Mom spanked us with a steel hardened spatula, the kind with holes in it. My brother and I will tell you that it was far worse than any belt.

In high school it was a different story. I was suspended so many times that I forgot a bunch of them. The first occurrence was the pass key thing and the second was the locker room fiasco.

The athletic locker room at Riverside had a large wooden basin on the floor outside the shower area that was filled with white powder used to prevent athlete’s foot.

Jim Hanley and Jim Hishmeh decided that it might be fun to toss handfuls of the chalky, white powder at their teammates as they exited the shower with their wet bodies. In no time at all there was a room full of Pillsbury Dough Boys running amok. When the two Jims ran out of the powder, they cracked open a new fifty-pound sack and emptied it on everyone within shouting distance. Then came the hose to dampen everything and everyone in the locker room.

Soon others joined in and in no time the powder was used up and the laughing finally came to an end.

The following morning both Jims were summoned to Vice Principal Schneck’s office. Seated next to Mr. Schneck was a rather stoic Wally Bruss, the head janitor of Riverside High School.

Wally led things off by accusing us of being the ringleaders of the locker room melee. His disappointment in us peaked when he informed us that he had three janitors working through the morning hours to remove the foot powder that had miraculously turned to cement. He claimed that they had to bring in jackhammers to remove it all. The cost was going to be high since Bruss's staff had to work overtime. They eventually provided the boys with a statement for the work and it was much more than they ever imagined. Both Jims ended up setting pins every night after school for a number of months until the debt was settled.

A few days later Jim Hanley was passing from class to class when he saw Mr. Bruss sitting at a hall monitor's desk.

"Get off your butt Wally. I'm paying your salary," blurted the indiscreet Hanley.

Before the period came to an end Jim was back in Mr. Schneck's office and suspended from school for his insubordination. Marge Hanley made yet another trip to the Vice Principal's office.

During my junior year I was declared ineligible for football because of grades. One morning I was called into Mr. Schneck's office, and sitting behind the desk was Mr. Fallon, our football coach. Coach Fallon accused me of breaking into some of the player's lockers and stealing things during football practice. Now didn't I have a wonderful reputation?

I adamantly denied the accusation because I wasn't at all guilty. I later learned that the culprit was my buddy, Ziggy Zelinski. Nonetheless, Fallon didn't believe me and told me that he was going to suspend me and I couldn't return to school until I brought back all of the stolen items.

I said, "OK I'm going and I'm not coming back because I didn't

do it.” I was holding back tears as I walked out of the office, heading for home.

Fallon followed, ordering me to stop and come back in the office. I continued my journey and he ran after me stopping me in front of the school auditorium. A group of students and teachers came out of their classrooms to see what the ruckus was. Coach Fallon grabbed me by the shirt and ordered me to obey him.

I told him again that I didn’t swipe anything and I was leaving, just like he directed me to do. As I turned to leave, he attempted to pull me back, and in the process ripped the shirt right off my back. I could no longer hold back the tears as I hightailed it down the stairs and headed straight for home.

When my mother saw the tears and her half-naked son, she demanded an explanation. I retold the story and her Italian blood immediately began percolating. She knew Fallon as her classmate from grade school and a year at Lincoln High School and decided to take matters into her own, capable hands.

She put on some lipstick and left home in a huff. She was going to tell Fallon a thing or two about a thing or two.

In an hour or so my mother came home and told me to return to school because she took care of things. We never discussed what was said and Coach Fallon never said another word about the incident.

I saw Coach Fallon a number of times after graduation when he officiated track meets that I competed in and at banquets where I was a speaker. He told me that he had been following my accomplishments and that he was proud of me and the strides that I had taken to improve myself. “You are finally on the right track, Jim,” he offered.

The first time that the police came knocking on the door at 2711

N. Newhall I must have been around twelve years old. One summer evening after the streetlights came on a group of us were on the prowl. To our surprise we found an open garage behind a home on Riverside Place.

We stuck our noses in the garage, and much to our delight we discovered a cache of candy, boxes and boxes of the sweet stuff. It was like Disneyland, a plethora of treats that tempted the integrity of every one of us.

We casually and ever so discretely entered the garage to see if our eyes were playing games with our taste buds. They weren't! This was the mother lode, candy heaven.

We began filling our pockets and ran across the street to Riverside Park where we began to stuff and cram our mouths with our loot. This was indeed tasty and so tempting that the following evening we returned to scene of the crime for another go at it.

A day later a police car pulled up in front of our home and two detectives came to our door requesting that I join them in their car to answer a few questions. My heart was racing, beating out of control. I was scared, but I readily admitted to the heist, and with that confession, they drove me directly to the Police Station on Fourth and Hadley Streets.

When we arrived, I found each of my accomplices already seated and each was noticeably shaken and disgraced. We never spoke to one another.

Eventually one of the officers lectured and reprimanded us as a group. Our parents were eventually called and directed to come to the station to pick up their children. I know now how humiliating this must have been for our parents because each of us came from good families.

The following evening my mother marched me over to the home

we stole the candy from. Mom waited below the steps as I walked up and rang the doorbell. When the man of the house answered I began my apology with a trembling voice and a river of tears cascading down my cheeks.

The candy salesman smiled, gave me a pat on the back, and he sincerely accepted my apology. It was a quiet walk home. I let my family down and it would not be the last time.

Now here's where I began repressing those ugly moments of my youth. The, *if I forget it ... it never happened technique*. My foggy memory tells me that the following incident took place during my junior year while I was ruled ineligible to play football.

Snooky Cira and I were up to no good one evening and in order to rid ourselves from our boredom, we decided that breaking into the Economy Drugs on Oakland Avenue, where I once worked, would give us a jolt of excitement.

I remembered that the basement window in the alley was almost always left open, and that particular evening it was. At the time it was a good thing, but soon afterwards it wasn't at all good.

In we crawled and we immediately made our way up the stairs to creep around the store like a couple of crooks—which we were. We stayed as low as possible so passers-by couldn't see us rummaging through things in the dark and obviously closed drug store. This was made even more difficult because we didn't have a plan nor did we have our minds set on what we were going to pilfer.

While Snooky was opening cabinets and drawers and cramming things into his pockets, I went directly to the soda fountain, poured myself a coke and dropped in a scoop of vanilla ice cream for good measure. I had a clear view of Oakland Avenue through the large bay windows, and as long as I stayed low enough, none of

the pedestrians could see me enjoying my hastily made sundae.

We didn't even look for money because I knew that Hub took the money home each night upon closing, nor did we look for any drugs. During the '50s none of us did drugs. As far as we knew only musicians and Hell's Angels did that.

When we retreated through the basement window, Snooky's pockets were as full as was my belly. He had a couple of watches, some rubbers, a half pint of brandy, and other items that I have long since forgotten.

I failed to remember the incident until a week later when I was reminded by a couple of detectives that made a return trip to 2711 N. Newhall to interrogate me about the Economy Drug caper. I didn't have the slightest idea how they found out, but at least I was honest with them by readily confessing to the crime. I wasn't all bad.

I was taken to Fourth and Hadley again where the detectives called Hub Schmitt, the owner of the Economy Drugstore, who informed the officers that he would not press charges against Cira or me. I'm sure that this was due to the friendship Hub had with my mother.

I was released to the custody of my embarrassed parents without any charges being filed. The following day mother had me walk up to the Economy and apologize to Hub for my thoughtless act. Hub humbled me by accepting my apology. He took the time to lecture me about the ramifications of my act and more importantly, about letting my mother and family down.

LESS THAN A YEAR LATER and two doors south of the Economy at the East Side Foods, Ziggy Zelinski decided to make some easy money. Like Snooky and me, my good buddy had not given a great

deal of thought to his felonious scheme. Perhaps we weren't meant to be crooks.

The East Side Foods was a thriving business on Oakland Avenue owned and operated by Bernie and Sam Kaufmann. Ziggy somehow found his way up to the roof of the store. He recklessly broke open the skylight and awkwardly lowered himself into the store. Ziggy wasn't looking for fruits or veggies; he had his mind set on greens, the kind that belongs in your wallet.

He foraged around in the back storage area and the small office. He began shaking with excitement when he came upon a metal cash box in the desk. After prying the box open, his eyes sparkled over the abundant cache that stared up at Ziggy.

He carefully and cautiously began to fill his pockets with the money, laughing inside over his stroke of good luck. Ziggy hit a bonanza.

When all the money was safely stashed away, he slipped out of the office and entered the store area. He looked up at his point of entry; the broken skylight loomed at least fifteen feet from the floor. He realized for the first time that he was definitely not going to leave the way he came. He was perplexed to say the least. He returned to the storeroom and found the rear door was locked tighter than a Manhattan apartment. What was he going to do? His euphoria began to fade when he realized that he was locked inside the store with no way out.

Ziggy had no contingency plan and had given no thought to his exit from the crime scene. He nervously returned to the office and while looking around, he noticed a phone sitting atop the desk. He had a thought, a way out, so he began calling every friend he had until he finally reached one. The friend's real name will not be revealed.

“Johnny it’s Zig. I need a big favor from you. I want you to drive up to Oakland Avenue and park in front of the Economy Drugs. I want you to check out the area, making sure there are no cops around. When the coast is clear, I want you to flash your lights a couple of times. Immediately after you have done that, get ready because there’s gonna be a crate of oranges flying out through the front window of the East Side Foods and I’m gonna be right behind it.”

No one would ever refuse Ziggy anything—or else you’d pay a dear price. So Johnny was there as requested He flashed his lights; out came the orange crate and as promised Ziggy was directly behind it. Johnny pulled up in front of the East Side Foods and the two of them drove off into the sunrise.

DURING THE WINTER OF ’51 TO ’52, Riverside was playing a basketball game against Pulaski High on the southside campus. A Riverside Junior by the name of John Schulz wanted to attend the game in the worst way. He pleaded with his mother, beseeching her into giving him the car keys and allowing him to stay out late. Her failure to give in to her son’s pleas brought about her demise.

With John’s father out of town, he quickly retrieved his father’s shotgun and without thought, emptied a couple of shells into the mother of the house. His younger brother and sister began freaking out, so John used up the remaining shells, killing both of them.

He located the car keys and drove to the game with a couple of buddies as though nothing had happened. Then after the game he returned home, cleaned up a bit, packed his bag and found some money before hightailing it out of Dodge. He was soon apprehended and sentenced to prison.

Jerry Schulz reports that this was indeed a sad story and is quick to admit that they were in no way related. He adds, "... So the '50s were not all 'Happy Days.'" Pulaski won the game.

IT WAS EARLY SUMMER OF '54 and shortly after our graduation from Riverside, when a number of us got together, intent on seeking some peculiar form of excitement. Outrageous and criminal is what we were actually looking for.

This was a unique evening for me since I had been spending practically all of my free time with my girlfriend Kitty. Being out with the boys was a rare occasion for me and I reacted badly.

We went for a beer run to Campanelli's down on Brady Street where under-aged teens were always able to buy beer. We drove around the eastside in a caravan of cars drinking and conspiring. While driving about aimlessly, loose and lacking in common sense from the beer, we passed the home of one of our teachers, and eureka, our search for excitement ended.

Someone pointed out that we had found the home of Mr. Holmes, an English teacher at Riverside. I imagine that each member of our throng of troublemakers had at one time sat in Mr. Holmes' classroom. He was gifted, a knowledgeable but very vulnerable teacher.

The lights were out in the house, which was a bit strange since it wasn't very late. Snooky Ciria crept up to house and pounded on the door and quickly returned to our group that was concealed behind the bushes and trees near the Holmes' house. Since no lights went on nor noise came from within the residence, we coaxed Snooky into returning to the porch to ring the doorbell.

"Go wake 'em up Snooky," he was ordered!

When this ploy also failed to elicit a response, I guess you could

safely say that it was the signal for us to turn into a pack of wild animals. We were out of control as we ran into the rear yard. Now what?

Johnny Hirth, soon to be nicknamed the “Hose,” took hold of the garden hose and placed it through the milk chute and turned on the water. Not to be outdone, I hoisted a large stone over my head and with all my might I heaved it through the window on the rear porch of the home. The noise was deafening and gave us cause to scramble off the property and get the heck out of there.

As we pulled away, Snooky hurled a full can of beer through a window in the front of the home. This put an exclamation point on our horrible display of gang mentality.

Within a few days, each one of us were arrested and brought downtown to Police Headquarters in the Safety Building. Our night out with the boys turned into a pretty big thing since it was not only a despicable act of vandalism, but Mrs. Holmes just happened to be the President of the Milwaukee Board of Education.

The chief of detectives and the district attorney questioned each of us. There was a reporter and a photographer from the Milwaukee Journal there to get the story, a story that would appear in the next edition of the paper along with our photographs that were plastered on the front page. This turned into a horrible embarrassment to each of our families. Nice way to make the front page!

Mr. and Mrs. Holmes were called, and they kindly refused to press charges against us. The authorities no longer had reason to hold us and released us after we spent a humiliating night in the city jail.

A few days later Kitty escorted me over to the home of Mr. and

Mrs. Holmes. Kitty was Mr. Holmes' teacher aide and considered it necessary for me to apologize to the family that for some unknown reason refused to press charges against my cohorts and me.

I was out of my element, embarrassed, shaking, and totally uncomfortable as the kindly Mrs. Holmes met us at the door and led us into her parlor where Mr. Holmes was already seated. Our hostess offered us a cup of tea, which I welcomed so I could at least keep my hands occupied.

Kitty sat close to me on the sofa for moral support, anxiously awaiting my apology, the apology that I had been practicing for a couple of days.

It was an awkward situation for all of us as I let loose with my request for forgiveness. The Holmes' felt my discomfort and attempted to ease my distress by comforting me as they assured me that it was no big deal. Nonetheless, I realized that it was a big deal and their benevolence helped make our time together a little easier than I expected and deserved.

I saw a completely different side of Mr. Holmes that day in 1954, a human side that we seldom associate with our teachers, our parents, or any adults. I believe that Kitty was proud of me for facing up to my wrongdoing, as were Mr. and Mrs. Holmes.

There is a bit of irony to this story because I would one day teach the very same class that Mr. Holmes taught me. I thought of him often as I lectured my students, hoping that I could do as good a job as he had. He and his wife also taught me a valuable lesson in forgiveness.

LESS THAN A YEAR LATER I made my last poor decision, a decision that ended up with me really digging my way into some

pretty deep shit. Earlier in the evening I had a disagreement with Kitty and as it played out, I wouldn't see her again for nine years.

Since it was a Saturday night, I decided to take a run down to Farwell and North and see if any of the guys were around and maybe we could manufacture a bit of excitement.

I found Charlie and Wally sitting in Fischer's; they, too, expressed a desire for a little excitement. They weren't among my top choices of guys to have a fun night out with, but Charlie had a car, a gangster style Caddy that was long and sleek, the kind with the big fins, and it was black in color. Wearing my best fedora, pegged pants with blue suspenders, suede spade shoes, and a "Mr. B" collared shirt, I was "the" gangster.

We drove out of town, a few miles west to Oconomowoc, a small community made up of equal parts of farmers and blue-collar folk. We had been there before and enjoyed returning because the teenagers looked up to us and went out of their way to be our friends, our buddies.

That Saturday night was no different from the rest. The moment we entered the malt shop the locals sidled up to us, confident that we were their best friends. They bought us drinks and sandwiches, tried fixing us up with local girls, and shared all of their innermost secrets with us.

That night we asked a couple of the young guys where we could lay our hands on some quick cash. One of them pointed out that the Chevy dealer down the main drag had a garage behind the showroom that housed the school buses. In each bus there was a cash box under the driver's seat. They were supposedly filled with money.

That's all we needed to hear; it was music to our ears. We hung out in a country café drinking coffee 'til the town went to sleep.

When the streets were deserted, we found our way over to the Chevy dealer and went directly to the door that we were told was always left open.

So far so good. Once inside we spotted the buses in the corner. We made a mad dash to the treasures held within the yellow monsters. Much to our disappointment there wasn't a cash box in any of the buses. We never considered that on weekends the drivers would turn in the cash rather than leave it inside the bus. Our bubble had burst and we would leave Oconomowoc poorer than when we arrived, and that was only the beginning.

The following morning, I was awakened from a sound sleep by a pair of detectives. It seemed that they were as confused as I was. They didn't know what they were rousting me for, only that they had orders to pick me up and bring me downtown to the station.

I spent a day and night in jail while they tried to figure out why I was there. As it turned out, some Good Samaritan in Oconomowoc noticed a suspicious automobile in the downtown area (Charlie's black Caddy). wrote down the license plate and reported it to the authorities.

The locals in Oconomowoc checked the license plate on the Caddy and found that it was registered to Charlie who lived on Bartlett Avenue on Milwaukee's eastside. They asked the Milwaukee Police to run by Charlie's place and question him about why his car was parked on the main drag of Oconomowoc in the wee hours of the morning.

Charlie didn't hold anything back. At that moment he became a righteous young man and hastily admitted to the crime and incriminated me along the way. In street talk, Charlie was a rat.

I was picked up at the Milwaukee County Jail by two armed sheriffs from Waukesha County. They shackled me like I was

some dangerous criminal, and transported me a few miles west to the Waukesha County Jail, my new home for the next few days.

My Uncle Bob temporarily bailed me out and paid the retainer to my lawyer, Joe Greco, a local attorney and politician, and a football teammate of Bob's at Lawrence College.

Joe had me plead guilty, confident that he'd get me off because I really didn't do any damage to the property, nor did I take anything. Joe's confidence proved wrong when the judge sentenced me to one to two years in the State Reformatory in Green Bay. My past indiscretions weighed heavily on the judge that was responsible for adjudicating my case.

As a sheriff was shackling me, I looked over my shoulder at my mother who was visibly weeping and being comforted by Gil Wettstein, a neighborhood buddy that drove my mother to Waukesha for the court proceedings.

It took a while for all of this to sink in. Once again, I let my family and friends down, and it would be the last time that would ever happen, and I didn't know what in the world to expect in Green Bay. This was the big turning point in my life. I had learned a lesson and I was at last growing up. I hit bottom!

The trip to Green Bay took over two hours and every mile along the way I came to realize that I had forfeited my freedom for a good time. I was embarrassed and ashamed of my actions and on that journey north into the unknown; I vowed to turn my life around.

My jaw dropped when we reached our destination. This was far from the image I had of Green Bay, a reform school, a home for wayward minors. This, my friend, was the Big House, a prison, the slammer. It was massive, a gothic gray, dreary looking building, the type that housed Jimmy Cagney in the movies and Al

Capone in real life. It was something that Poe or Hawthorne might write about. The reformatory was girded by a twenty-five-foot wall with turrets that housed armed prison guards.

My armed escorts parked in front of the ancient fortress and guided me through the front door that was manned by prison guards; every door in the place was. We proceeded through a series of doors on our way to the warden's office—and the loud clanging of the doors shutting behind us remains fresh in my mind.

The name on the door said, Mr. Nuss, Warden. It was a small, unpretentious office, which couldn't be said about Mr. Nuss. The warden was a wide man with a crew cut and hands the size of a gorilla's. He was not unlike a Marine Corps drill sergeant or a Vince Lombardi. He was tough and he was the boss, mincing no words to the contrary. He was a one-man show, a powerful dictator relegated to the responsibility of rehabilitating the teenagers under his charge.

Mr. Nuss was tough and scary, but I quickly learned that he was fair. During my interview he chewed me out over letting my family down.

"You don't belong here," he bellowed.

"Out of the 700 inmates here, you are one of only two high school graduates here in the reformatory."

Snooky Cira, who beat me to Green Bay by a couple of months, was the other. Can you believe it? Two high school graduates in the entire reformatory and both graduated from the same class in the same school.

Nuss stressed the fact that he was going to keep a close eye on me to make sure that I was on the right track. He was a man of his word and for some unknown reason he took a special liking to me,

a rare event in the life of one of the last really tough guys.

Everyone in the reformatory was required to either work or go to school. Because of my athletic background Mr. Nuss gave me the job of running the gymnasium. I couldn't have imagined a better position and it helped make my time fly by.

The evenings were a completely different story. I cried myself to sleep countless evenings and I tried to keep busy by writing letters home. Sadly enough, all of my letters to Kitty went unanswered. That part of my life was over.

I organized teams and events for the reformatory. We had a basketball team made up of some pretty good athletes, playing high school teams from the area. At 6'2" I was the center of the team and had the good fortune of honing my skills by playing most of the day. Our biggest win that season was to defeat Shawano High School, the Wisconsin State Champion that year. Obviously, all of our games were home games and our opponents were a bit intimidated.

After basketball season was over, I was in charge of the baseball program. We had a coach, yet I organized the practices, handed out the uniforms, cut the grass, and lined the field for our games. We had a great team that year, playing American Legion and amateur teams from the Green Bay area.

I had hoped to pitch, but was relegated to first base because we had two outstanding pitchers, one whose brother pitched for the Detroit Tigers. We had a very biased and vociferous cheering section

In the evenings my counselor, Mr. Hershman, got me out of my cell three nights a week so I could clean and vacuum the indoor swimming pool. Afterwards we would go to the staff dining room where he'd treat me to coffee and pastries.

Mr. Nuss continued to monitor my progress and called me into his office one particular morning. I was somewhat worried. He informed me that he was pleased with me and as a reward; he was sending me up north to the reformatory's lumber camp located just north of Rhinelander at Lake Tomahawk.

I hated leaving my job, but everyone told me I'd be nuts not to accept since Camp McNaughton was a paradise. The scenery was beautiful, the camp was on a private lake, and it was a minimum-security place. With great thought and much unwillingness, I decided to leave my dream job.

I BID A RELUCTANT GOODBYE to my many new friends behind the walls and was driven northwest to Camp McNaughton, a two-hour drive away. The Green Bay Reformatory manned the secluded camp; its staff consisting of three guards, a warden, and an employee of the state forestry department.

I was once again filled with apprehension over the new and unknown surroundings along with an entirely fresh group of strangers to live with.

The camp was discretely hidden by a forest of pine trees. There wasn't a sign in front, only a winding dirt road that was at least a mile in length. In order to find the camp, you had to know exactly where you were going.

This would be a first for me because I never had the luxury of going away to camp as a kid. Quickly and willingly, I immersed myself in my new rustic and tranquil environment. For a city guy this was going to take some getting used to.

When we arrived at the end of the winding dirt road, an opening appeared that was home to a variety of buildings. The main, and by far the largest of the buildings, was the bunkhouse.

It served to house the inmates, had an office and sleeping quarters for the guards, had our kitchen, dining area, laundry, showers, and the TV room. The toilet was the outdoor type, a three-seater over a hundred yards from the bunkhouse. It seemed more like a mile during the frigid and snowy winters of Northern Wisconsin. There was a large sawmill on the other side of our baseball diamond, a garage that held the forestry trucks, a small office for the ranger, and a recreation building where we either lifted weights or boxed.

There were between thirty-five and forty-five inmates at McNaughton. We had a cook, a truck driver, a laundry person who also assisted the cook, and three or four sawmill workers. The remaining inmates made up the labor force, performing a variety of duties ranging from clearing brush, to making firebreaks and ski runs, to good old logging work.

We were fortunate to have four Native Americans at McNaughton. They were Chippewa Indians, very familiar with our area, and they taught us city guys how to enjoy the land and survive on it just as they did. We also had three African American roomies who shared their roots and lifestyles with us. I found these invaluable lessons; lessons that would fulfill an inner need to better understand life.

Like everyone else, I spent my first few months working with the crews in the vast and never-ending forests of Northern Wisconsin. I mastered the crosscut saw and how to notch and trim a tree with an axe. The work was invigorating and strenuous, soon causing my body fat to disappear. There were no sleepless nights in McNaughton; all of us were too exhausted to do anything but sleep the night away.

After a couple of months in the woods I was promoted to driving the camp truck. I didn't even have a driver's license. It

was the job that everyone wanted, but I was the favored one because of my work ethic and my attitude; being the biggest guy in camp surely didn't hurt my chances.

My main duties consisted of taking the trash out to the camp dump that was always overrun with bears looking for food. I had to be on my toes whenever I went to the dump. I also moved stuff around the camp. The only negative aspect of my job was emptying the honey buckets at the dump each morning. For your information, the honey bucket is the receptacle sitting directly beneath the holes in the outhouse. Yeah, it stunk, and yeah, I had to avoid splashing, but I did have tons of free time: free time to lift weights, run sprints, and practice putting the shot each day. I was in the best shape of my life.

I can't forget to mention that every Sunday evening we had a family of missionaries (father, mother, son, and two daughters) from Rhinelander come to our camp to share the word and praise the Lord. They were a kindly group that was genuinely concerned with our rehabilitation and most importantly, our salvation. We sang, we shared our testimony, and we learned all about Jesus. I would be forever moved by the kindness of this family.

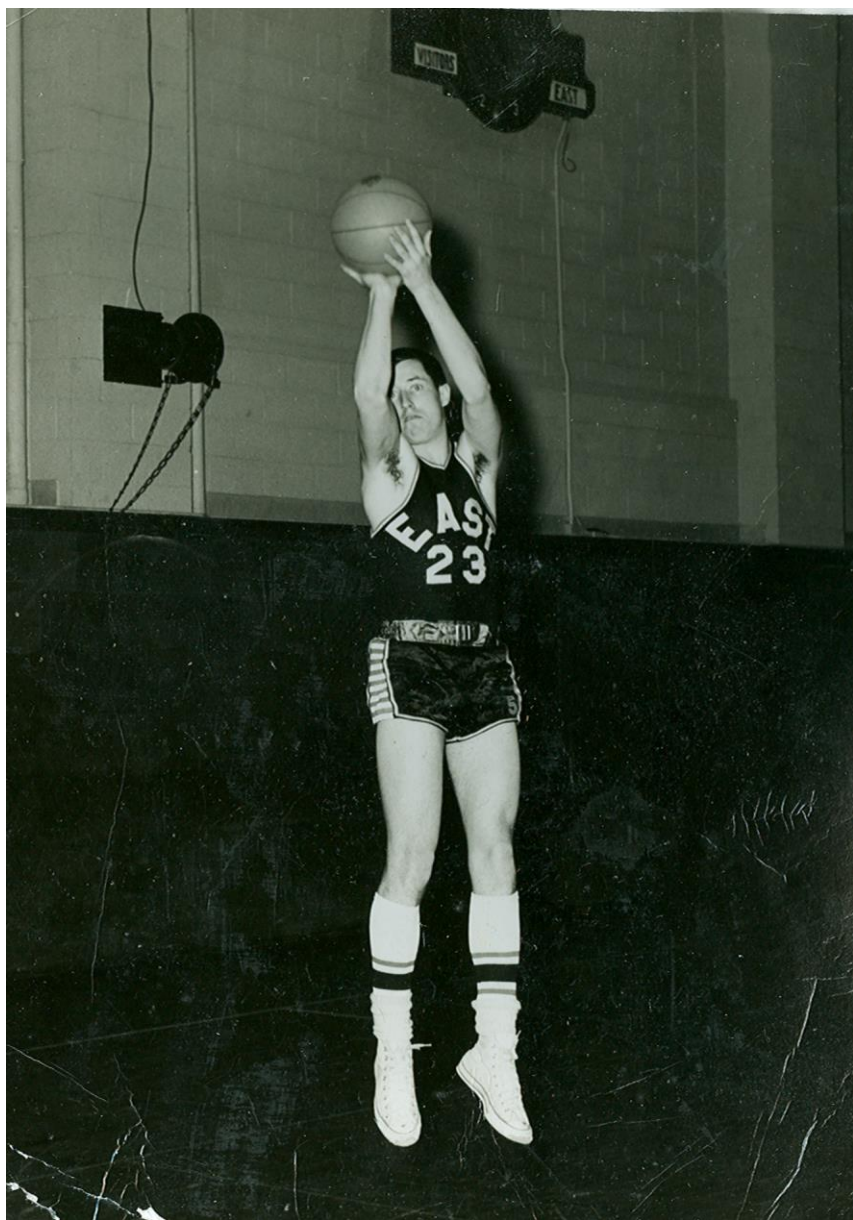
Forty some years later I would be doing exactly the same thing by spending a couple of days each week at the California Institution for Women, the oldest women's prison in the state. Ministering to these women brought back those memories of Camp McNaughton and a fertile seed planted by a loving family of missionaries.

This ended up just as Mr. Nuss has predicted. It was a true honor for me to live in an honor camp, and the lessons learned had a positive way of altering the wayward course that I had been traveling. Despite my never thanking Mr. Nuss, I am confident

that he knew what he did for me.

In spite of the fact that no one said a word to me, I am sure that my family was embarrassed over my temporary place of residence, and rightfully so. I myself was embarrassed!

Yet in short order I would be living testimony of a complete turnaround to my friends and family. Warden Nuss and my mother believed in me and their faith never wavered. My mother never condemned me or expressed humiliation over my deeds. Her love for me was strong and pure and she would leave this earth knowing that she did a great job and that I would amount to something special and make her proud. Unfortunately, my grandfather passed away while I was at camp. He never got to see the changes in his eldest grandchild, the young curly haired lad he walked beside through Lake Park every Sunday morning after mass.



Bill Gee, Riverside HS Basketball, circa 1968. (Photo #35)



Billy Gee Riverside quarterback vs. Boy's Tech 1968. (Photo #36)



Group of Eastside guys, circa 1962. ** (Photo #37, see Appendix)



Jim Hanley in Utah State University letter jacket, 1964.

(Photo #38)



Riverside cheerleader Suzanne Blum, circa 1967. Suzanne holds the title of Ms. Eastside and is a successful real estate agent in Milwaukee. (Photo #39)



First Eastside Decathlon, Lake Park, circa 1974. (Photo #40)



Rob Hanley shot putting in 1974 Decathlon. (Photo #41)



Jim Hanley shot putting in California meet, 1972. (Photo #42)



JOHN & ERNA KAMUCHEY

Mr. And Mrs. John Kamuchey. (Photo #43)



Eastside Decathlon at Riverside HS, circa 1979. (Photo #44)



Tom Flynn accepting trophy for decathlon. **
(Photo #45, see Appendix)



Ralph Sampson, Don Bader, Minute Bol in San Francisco,
(Photo #46)



Eastside Decathlon at Riverside HS, circa 1983. (Photo #47)



Jim, Valerie, and John Hanley in front of Axels on Oakland Avenue, 2009. (Photo #48)



Jim and Troy Hanley in front of the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music where Grandpa Romano taught 2008. (Photo #49)



Jim Hanley, Thelma Kamuchey, and Mike Melvoin lunching in Pasadena, 2008. (Photo #50)



Jim Hanley Coaching at Western Christian HS in California, 1985.

(Photo #51)



Warren (Mike) Adameak in the center of his officiating crew. **

(Photo #52, see Appendix)



Thelma Kamuchey with niece Amanda Lenti on left and daughter Cassandra on the right. (Photo #53)



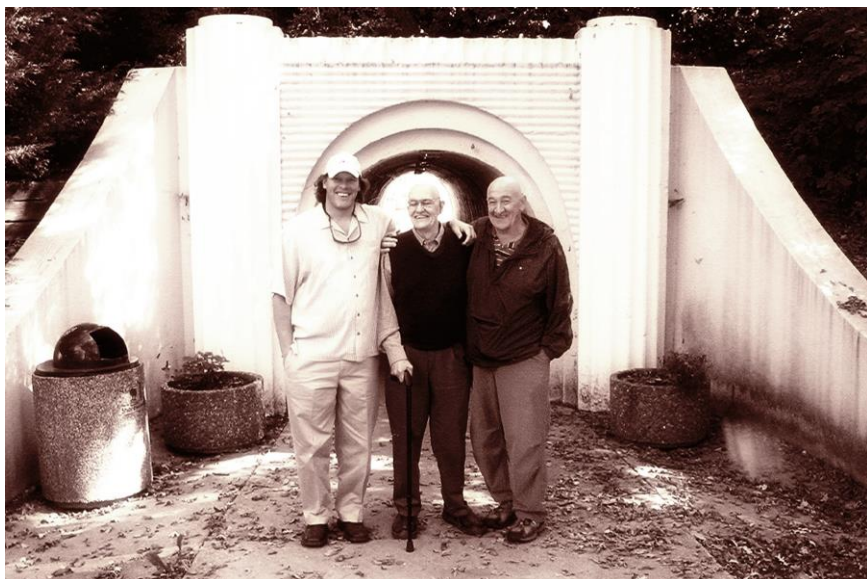
Jim Flynn receiving his black belt from Rhuel Luttrell in 2009.
(Photo #54)



Popular eastside neighborhood home located at 3138 N. Cambridge. (Photo #55)



Plymouth Church at 2717 E Hampshire, the home of our school dances and pick-up basketball games. (Photo #56)



Jim, Troy, and John Hanley in front of the Hubbard Park Tunnel (the Vagina) in 2008. (Photo #57)



Jim's children at Troy's 40th birthday in Denver, 2009. **
(Photo #58, see Appendix)



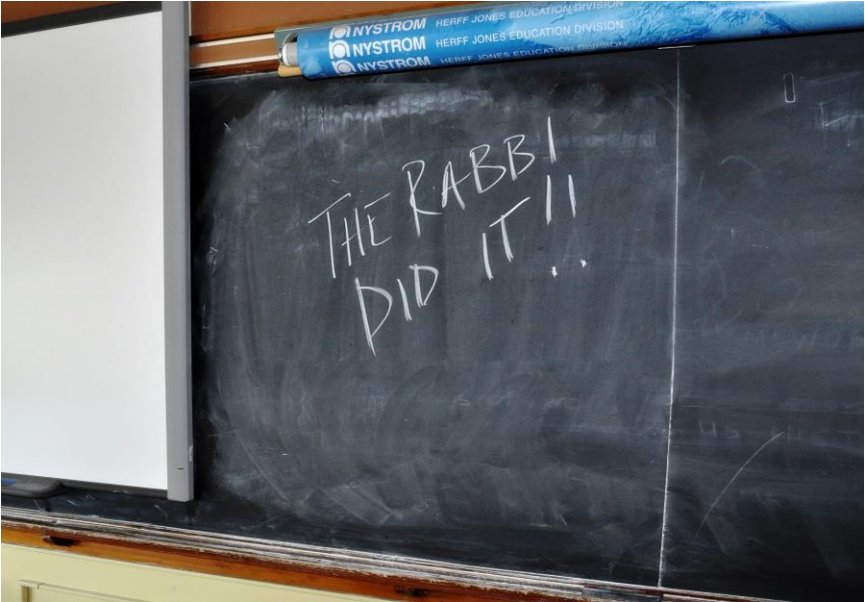
Fourth of July 2009 in Lake Park with Milwaukee's Mayor. **
(Photo #59, see Appendix)



Bill Gee and Tommy Regan at Riverside's Homecoming game in 2009. (Photo #60)



The Pig 'n Whistle, our popular hangout has seen better days. What memories! (Photo #62) Note: There is no Photo #61



Jim Hanley's homeroom ... 317. During 2009 Gathering at Riverside HS. (Photo #63)



Jim Hanley and Bill Gee in Lake Park at 2009 Fourth of July.
(Photo #64)



Jim Hanley addressing friends in Riverside HS Auditorium during
the 2009 Gathering. (Photo #65)



Strolling through Riverside HS during the 2009 Gathering. (Photo #66)



Mike, Jim, and Troy Hanley in front of Champion's Pub in 2009. (Photo #67)



Mike Prosser, Jim Hishmeh, and Jim Hanley at Riverside HS during the 2009 Gathering. (Photo #68)



Friends from the book's cover at 2009 Gathering. L-R ... Barb Herden, Don Brier, Libby Hishmeh, and Jim Hanley. (Photo #69)

**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT**

Chambers of
TERENCE T. EVANS
Circuit Judge

Federal Courthouse
517 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

July 27, 2009

President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to advise you that on January 7, 2010, the 30th anniversary of the day I first took the oath of office as an Article III Judge, I will retire from regular service as a United States Circuit Judge on the Seventh Circuit under the provisions of 28 U.S.C. 371(b)(1).

Serving as an Article III Judge, first on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin (January 1, 1980 to August 14, 1995), and then on the Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit (since August 15, 1995) has been an incredible privilege. My only regret is that the time has passed too quickly. But the good news is that in January I'll begin what I hope will be a long period of service as a judge in senior status. That service will primarily be on the Seventh Circuit, although I'm also looking forward to sitting on the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and, occasionally, on the district courts in Milwaukee, Chicago, and Seattle.

Sincerely yours,

Terence T. Evans
United States Circuit Judge

cc: Chief Justice John G. Roberts
Chief Circuit Judge Frank H. Easterbrook
Senator Herb Kohl
Senator Russ Feingold
James C. Duff: Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts
Hon. Barbara J. Rothstein: Director, Federal Judicial Center
Mr. Collins Fitzpatrick: Circuit Executive, Seventh Circuit
Ms. Carol Sefren: Judges Compensation and Benefits Division of the AO

Terry Evans's resignation letter. ** (Photo #70)

**** Denotes ... refer to Appendix**

Chapter Eighteen

**“A friend knows the song in my heart
and sings it when my memory fails.”**

Donna Roberts

We decided to add this chapter to accommodate some of our friends that had some pretty neat stuff to add. It's like an ***In The Words Of*** sort of chapter that we had to include.

MARYLAND AVENUE SCHOOL WAS a pleasant place with good teachers and likeable principals; Emil Faith, Elmer Manske, and Samuel Todd, each of whom encouraged athletics and manual training with Mr. Bick. The playground featured two ball diamonds, basketball courts, and equipment like monkey bars and climbing poles. We utilized the grounds year-round since there were always enough kids to choose up sides for softball, touch football, and basketball. Everyone got to play and I believe that we had more fun than today's kids do. It was amazing how well we got along with the absence of adult supervision, instruction, or interference.

And finally, the glorious day arrived when we started high school. The challenge was faced with anxiety. Fortunately, our grade school friends accompanied us and along with our new friends, we made the adjustment easy. But we were soon to be faced with algebra, science, and the dreaded homework. Yet we found a way to manage.

My memories are filled with new wonders of school spirit, clubs, plays, music and theater productions, pep rallies, sing-alongs with Mr. Kastner and Mr. Schneck, homeroom, changing

classes, study hall, cafeteria lunches, football games, cheerleaders, school songs, penny dances, and swing out days. We had great teachers like Mr. Lean for Latin, Miss Howe for algebra and geometry, Miss Watson for English, and Mr. Suchy for physics.

The only sports that I felt capable of were cross country and track. I hated every minute of the ordeal of distance running, but I thoroughly enjoyed the competition and the effort to have a winning team. Because of great runners like Bill Inda, Jim Lent, and Fred Brandenburg, East did very well. Fred and I have been friends since attending Maryland Avenue together and once we bicycled to Racine together. I was happy to captain the cross-country team in my senior year. I remember how proud we were when East won the city football championship under coach Potter. And how can we forget the Friday night dances at Plymouth Church and the get togethers at the Pig 'n Whistle.

Submitted by Don Hayden

THE YEAR WAS 1958. In some ways it was my “Summer of ’42,” only without the ocean beach house. Instead, my coming-of-age played out, around and inside a twenty by thirty-foot tin building with a plank floor known as E-2. It was a one-story, no-frills workhouse located on a gravel lot, overgrown with weeds in the shadow of Cornell Paperboard Company’s factory, just up from North Avenue near the Milwaukee River.

In post-war Milwaukee, the Journal Company erected a bunch of these “Es” as relay stations for newspaper delivery. Trucks from the Journal’s State Street pressrooms took the papers to the E’s and young teenagers delivered them from there to front doors. It was a place where many teenagers of my vintage got their first taste of the working world.

My world as a twelve-year-old consisted of memorizing the Catholic catechism (“Who is God? God is the Creator of heaven and earth.”), carousing around Riverside Park across the street from my home or hanging around Knoller’s Drug where the object was to avoid work. The closest thing I had to a job was taking the family garbage out to the alley for twenty-five cents a week.

Then one day a classmate told me of a paper route opening; fifty-two customers in a two square block area between Murray, Maryland, Webster, and Belleview Streets. He claimed it paid an eye-popping sum of \$2.50 a week.

It did, but not without exacting certain tolls.

I’d seen that tin building, E-2, many times walking to and from school. There were some raw-boned kids working out of that building with loud voices and fingernails dirty with newspaper ink. They were mostly twelve- to fourteen-year-olds, products of east side grade schools, along with a few guys from Riverside High School, plus a few dropouts. They were always in a hurry, hustling their empty coaster wagons into E-2 and then out minutes later weighted down with 150-page evening papers, pulled into tight bundles with coarse rope and stacked high in those coasters. “Get outa my way kid,” was as close as I ever got to a conversation with any of them.

But I wanted that \$2.50 a week.

So I showed up one summer day and was met with a grunt by Carl. He was the station captain and much older, probably eighteen.

“Okay, we’ll give you a shot,” he told me over his shoulder while heaving the day’s papers in fifty-pound bundles off the Journal truck.

“Fired the last kid cuz he missed Sunday mornin’s twice. Do ya

know how to sub papers?”

I didn't, so he subbed for me and bundled my fifty-two papers before driving me to my route where we did my first day's delivery. With that done, the party was over.

The next day was Sunday. That meant morning delivery. Carriers had to be at E-2 by 6 am. Papers had to be inside screen doors or under porch mats by 7 am or else! The “or else” were slips of yellow paper containing complaints from unhappy customers, phoned in to Journal headquarters. These yellow slips were delivered to the station captain along with the next day's papers. Each day started at E-2 with Carl standing spread legged behind his metal desk, yellow slips in hand. No papers were distributed to the carriers until he read off with a booming voice, each and every complaint.

“Buckner: no paper to 2445 Park Place! Koshnick: wet paper at 2474 Bartlett Avenue! Reschke: paper blew away from 1821 Bradford! Bartalone: torn paper at 2320 Cramer!”

All carriers stood around, impatiently waiting to get their papers, sub them, and beeline it out of E-2,

“Wolski: no paper 'til 5:30 at 2512 N Murray! Dostalek: Sunday comics missing at 2337 N Oakland.” Cold stares were aimed at the screw-ups.

Oh no, you did not want to be on that list.

Buckner made the list once too often. As I walked up to E-2 one afternoon some of the older guys had tied him up and stuffed him inside an A & P shopping cart with a canvas newspaper bag wrapped around his head so he couldn't see. I got there just in time to watch him being pushed down the steep, brush-covered hill toward the Milwaukee River. He quit his route shortly afterwards.

But I had troubles of my own. DiNardo (name changed) was a long-time carrier. He was two years older, stood 6'2", and tipped the scales around 250 pounds. Each day he stomped into E-2 with hobnail boots and a mouthful of profanity. And he didn't like me.

At first it was just the talk.

"You shithead, no shitheads allowed in E-2!"

Why me, I thought? I'd never said a word to this guy. I just wanted to sub my papers and get out of E-2 like everyone else. But he' would have none of it.

E-2 was lined with long metal tables where the carriers stood and subbed, sorted and bundled their papers. On humid summer days the windowless tin walls would radiate heat. Inside we smelled like the sweatshop we were. On freezing winter days, the ideal spot was next to the pot-bellied stove. Those near the door wore gloves to ward off frostbite.

One day while subbing, I heard DiNardo's boots approaching from behind. He bumped me from the table.

"Get your shit out of my way. I'm subbing here now."

A few of the carriers looked our way, but said nothing. I looked for Carl, but he turned away and ignored me. I sheepishly picked up my papers and moved to another table.

I considered that perhaps I didn't need the \$2.50 a week after all.

"What's the matter?" my father asked that night after supper.

I reluctantly told him. He showed up at E-2 the next day and stood outside the station as I bundled my papers inside. Nothing happened.

Then about a week later, it was more bellowing.

"Wolski, go sub outside! We don't want no Polaks in here." DiNardo again! Only this time he lumbered over and with one

sweep of his arm sent my papers off the metal table halfway out the door. Then he squared up to face me, a leer on his face, hands on his hips. “You chicken shit,” he yelled. “What are you gonna do about it?” All faces turned in our direction.

This was one of those rare instances in life, even in a young life, when you sense you are in a moment you will never forget. And you also sense that if you make the wrong decision, it could be a really bad memory.

At that instant, I thought about the slow paying customers on Thursday collection days, about the grind of the past Christmas morning with the 356-page paper, about those damn advertising inserts that had all of us subbing more each day, and about those lucky Sentinel carriers with their skinny dailies they could deliver on bikes and toss up onto porches in tight folds—and no Sunday deliveries. I thought about putting every paper every day inside a storm or screen door so there would be no more yellow slips. Most of all I thought about the unspoken bond that I had developed with most of the carriers, each of us intent on making the few bucks a week that our working-class families could not afford to give us.

So I stood up straight, my knees weak, trembling. Then I leaned in close to DiNardo. And I spit in his face.

I was transfixed, frozen in fright, my face twelve inches from his, watching the spit run down his cheeks. For about ten seconds, the usual racket at E-2 stopped—complete silence.

DiNardo could have pounded me into a bloody ball and rolled me down the hill to the river. But he didn’t. Instead, he turned, walked back to his stack, began subbing his papers and made small talk to the carrier next to him as if nothing had happened. This would be our last confrontation.

About a year later, I discovered sports, so there was no time after school for a paper route ...

Eventually E-2 disappeared, and along with it, that subculture of young men with coaster wagons who made it hum.

Submitted by Wayne Wolski
Holy Rosary Grade School, 1960

Chapter Nineteen

**“Life is partly what we make of it,
and partly what it is made by the friends we choose.”**

Tennessee Williams

We’ve left a few important characters out of our trip down memory lane. They happened to be a group of individuals that had an impact our lives, be it positive or negative. Nonetheless, we loved ‘em and we want to share them with you.

There was this special guy at Riverside that I have a great deal of fondness and admiration for. A lot of our friends would agree that he deserves special recognition for his strength and character. It is sad that we never had the opportunity to tell him how special he was to us and what a good person he was. But we were kids and kept our innermost feelings inside.

HERBIE WILSON WAS A TRAILBLAZER, doing things that no one else dare attempt and he did them well. You see, Herbie was an African-American, the first student of color to attend Riverside High School during my era, my generation. How tough was that?

During the ‘40s, ‘50s, and ‘60s Milwaukee’s neighborhoods were not integrated in any way, shape, or form. Generalizing a bit, the African-American population of Milwaukee was confined to an area from Walnut to Burleigh and from 3rd Street up to 16th street. It would be many years before the city schools and the landscape of the city became integrated. It was obvious that if Herbie wanted to attend Riverside, he had to rely on public transportation to get him there, and that’s exactly what he did.

Herbie had a difficult time fitting in and it wasn’t because of his

personality; it was simply the color of his skin. He was stared at, scoffed at, and was the brunt of countless insensitive comments. His strength and his will to endure were Herculean and incredibly admirable.

Herbie joined clubs, played on our football team. He tried and he tried to fit in and in many respects he succeeded. He was a one-man integration team, a vanguard for things to come.

Forty some years later I tried to duplicate Herbie's fete when I undertook a spiritual journey across the USA. I went to the Carolinas to find out what it would be like to live among and with African Americans in the Jim Crow South.

I lived with, ate with, and worshipped with people of color. I was given a slight taste of what our high school friend and teammate, Herbie Wilson, had to endure. It was a tremendous experience and it drew me closer to Herbie. Wherever you are Herbie, you were a special person to all of us that knew you back in the early '50s and we hold you in high esteem today.

JOE DA LOSH STARTED OUT as a mystery person; a non-existing, comical topic inspired by a number of players from our championship football team of 1950. Frank Scaffidi and Jack Dordel were two of the culprits. Joe Da Losh was like the nerd of the day; the class screw up. Joe's name was always entered on the seating chart for our study halls and when the teacher asked, "Where's Da Losh?" the entire class broke into raucous laughter. The seniors went so far as to nominate this mythical being to the student council and the homecoming king. He failed to win either contest.

Along came an underclassman that wasn't content with his birth name, Jack Laskowski. Jack was so unhappy that he decided

to do something about it, and as long as no one was claiming to be the much talked about Joe Da Losh, he systematically became the mystery person. He obtained a library card and the school's Cavalier Club card and membership card into the Jack Armstrong Fan Club each with the name of Joe Da Losh written on it. He proudly carried them in his billfold that he enjoyed showing to his casual and most gullible of friends.

As Jack (Joe) matured, he graduated to a social security and a bogus draft card. With his new identity he assumed a unique aura and persona. He was a changed guy that began talking with an accent. One day it was French and the next he was British. His wardrobe took on a new look when he began wearing a cape and a beret. He loved to wrap himself in scarves and was one of the first to wear sandals. There are countless rumors as to what happened to Joe Da Losh and that's where we'll leave him.

MIKE MELVOIN WAS A CHARTER member of our group despite never hanging out, never raising hell, and never disappointing anyone. Mike grew up at 2709 N. Farwell, just north of Park Place. He was the president of our student council at Riverside; in fact, he was the president of the inter-city council, an auspicious group made up of student council presidents from every school in Milwaukee.

Mike was an honor student and wound up as the only neighborhood kid to become an Ivy Leaguer when he was granted a scholarship to Dartmouth. But Mike's forte wasn't his academic superiority and achievements. Mike was and is an exceptionally gifted musician.

His piano playing has become legendary in the music industry and it all started on Milwaukee's eastside. Mike began playing the

piano at the age of three and hasn't stopped since. At Riverside Mike was the field director for our award-winning marching band. He was Sam Holdorf's protégé, his right-hand man and his go-to guy. He also regularly played for our popular Friday night dances at Plymouth Church.

In our senior year Mike expanded his expertise to jazz and began playing on weekends with a jazz combo at local nightspots like the Elbow Room in downtown Milwaukee. Mike played with the Scat Johnson Trio, three older black jazz musicians that featured Mike's innate skill on the piano.

We dressed up in our best gangster outfits in order to do our best adult impressions to gain entry to the clubs since we were still minors. Mike made us proud and I'm sure that Scat Johnson felt the same because Mike seemed to fit in like an experienced veteran.

Mike had a couple of jobs working for radio stations in and around Milwaukee while still in high school. He had show business in his blood.

After high school Mike moved east. When he graduated from Dartmouth, he moved south to New York City where he honed his piano playing abilities in Harlem jam sessions. He eventually moved west and for the past forty some years he has established himself as one of the most versatile and accomplished pianists and composers in Los Angeles.

Mike's credits are a Who's Who of music ranging from Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, Peggy Lee, Tony Bennett, and Joe Williams to Quincy Jones, John Lennon, Tom Waits and the Beach

Boys. Also, Barry Manilow, Bette Midler, Wayne Newton, Glen Campbell, Michael Jackson, Bing Crosby, Andy Williams, Dean

Martin, Mel Torme, Paul Anka, Sammy Davis Jr., Ann Margaret, Carol Burnett, Frankie Laine, Patti Page, Liza Minelli, Diana Ross, Ray Charles, and the list goes on and on.

Mike also had much success as a composer for film and TV. Notable sound track recordings at the keyboard included the films *Rocky*, *The French Connection*, *Play Misty For Me*, and for TV, the theme for *Mission Impossible*. Mike also composed and conducted the scores for Streisand's *The Main Event*, Michael Caine's *Ashanti*, Matt Dillon's *The Big Town*, as well as soundtracks for the television series *Early Edition*, *Lou Grant*, *Beretta*, *MacGyver*, and *Fame*.

Mike also served as the National President of the Recording Academy, which presents the Grammy Awards. Mike has captured countless awards and we who know him can attest to the fact that he has come a long way from playing at our high school dances at Plymouth Church and Sam Holdorf's band at Riverside High School.

DON SIMETH IS OUR HONORARY eastsider. He grew up on the north side of Milwaukee and attended Rufus King High School, home of North Stadium where Riverside played all of their home football games. After high school Don attended and graduated from the Wisconsin University at La Crosse.

Don had a passionate love affair with sports. He was known to most eastside guys as the coach of Maryland Playground and to a lesser number as the coach at Messmer High School. Don worked tirelessly, often holding down two or three jobs at a time.

Don loved young people and became both a friend and a mentor to all of those that came into his sphere of influence. Besides working as a beer vendor at Brave's games at County

Stadium, Don had a summer business where he organized and conducted company picnics for large corporations based in Milwaukee. He was able to hire a number of his Messmer athletes to help run the activities. Don's athletes also helped him run some sort of evening fitness program at the House of Good Shepherd, an institution for wayward and troubled young girls. But most of the eastsiders remember Don as the coach of Maryland Avenue Playground.

Perhaps no one knew Don better than Tommy Flynn did. According to Tom, "... Don convinced me that he was the best playground 'coach' ever as he organized so many activities. I was constantly busy."

"Don always had a convertible and would drive a group of us to the Pig 'n Whistle on Capitol Drive after the playground closed. My summers became a whirlwind of playing basketball, softball, and strike out over and over again and usually competing with older guys."

Maryland playground was known throughout the city for the place to go for a great softball game or for a challenging game of basketball.

Herb Carl remembers spending nights as a grade schooler on Maryland watching the "big-guys" play basketball. Don Simeth was responsible for bringing the best talent to his playground. They came from Marquette, UWM, U of Wisconsin, and a number from some of the state colleges. There were all city and all state players there every night and Herb marvelled how our own Pete Kamuchey stifled an All American forward from Marquette with his great defense.

Herb and his buddy, Don Grossman, continue to laugh over the game when Don Bader, all of 4'8", told Don Kojis, a future

NBA star to go underneath ... “... we’ll shoot from out here!”

Flynn adds, “A year or so later Don took a teaching/coaching job at Messmer High School where I developed a long relationship with him. Don was a special guy.”

“I recall years later, while traveling around the country for the FBI, a call that I received from my mother telling me that Don had passed away. It hit me like a ton of bricks because I thought that he would live forever. I never had the opportunity to tell him how much he meant to me and so many other eastsiders. He was an angel to me when I needed one.”

“I would later tell his wife Kay and their two children just how much I treasured him, but it would have been better had I told Don directly.”

COLLEEN DEWHURST WAS a little before our time, but nonetheless, a card carrying eastsider. She lived at 1742 N Prospect and graduated from Riverside in 1942. She attended Whitefish Bay High her freshman and sophomore years, Shorewood High for her junior, and finally saw the light and spent her senior year at Riverside. Naturally Riverside was her favorite.

She has countless films, plays, and TV credits besides winning multiple Tony and Emmy awards. She was married twice to George C. Scott and earned much acclaim for her role in *Anne of Green Gables*.

Colleen was a trailblazer, years ahead of her time and had the reputation of being a bit of a stinker. She was ceremoniously thrown out of Joe Plotkin’s Deli on Oakland and Locust a number of times for smoking—a forbidden habit for young gals back in the ‘40s.

MICHAEL SCHULTZ AND HIS TWIN brother Alan graduated from Riverside in 1957. The twins grew up in Milwaukee's inner-city area and were among the first wave of African Americans to attend Riverside High School. The boys utilized city buses to get to school, since back in the '50s Milwaukee was far from being integrated, especially the eastside.

The Schultz boys were better than average athletes and were considered to be excellent students. Michael opened the door for those that followed in his shadow. He attended school at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and Marquette where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in theater before moving on to do graduate work at Princeton. He might well have been the first African-American graduate of Riverside to attend an Ivy League school, which was the first of many firsts.

While at Princeton Michael's love affair with the stage and the screen bloomed and blossomed into an everlasting fascination with the arts. His passion brought him to New York City where he became one of the founders of the esteemed Black Ensemble Group. From that point it was up to the mountaintop for the Riverside grad.

Michael was a success on Broadway and nominated for a Tony Award as the best director in '69. From there he moved west and conquered Hollywood. He directed *Cooley High*, *Car Wash*, and *Which Way is Up?* He added countless films to his credits and then he conquered television with a list of shows that is far too generous to list.

Like Colleen Dewhurst, Michael was far ahead of his time. He successfully opened the doors for followers at Riverside, on Broadway, and in Hollywood.

DAVE SCHULZ LIVED AT 2742 N. Bartlett, only a couple of doors north of the Barron residence. Bob and Mary Schulz had five strapping children; Dave, Jerry, Bill, Peter, and Peggy. Dave was the eldest of the children and would become a household name in both Chicago and Milwaukee.

Dave matriculated from St. Pete's to Riverside and then to Purdue for his B.S., and eventually to Northwestern where he got his M.S. in Public Management.

Dave's future would be a whirlwind of public service in Chicago and Milwaukee. Because of his girth that often teetered around 400 pounds, Dave was easily recognizable. He held some pretty lofty public offices from the budget director of both Chicago and Milwaukee, to the Park's Director in Milwaukee to holding the office of Milwaukee's County Executive.

Dave passed away in 2007 at the young age of fifty-eight. He left behind a record of dedicated service. His brother Jerry, himself a gifted athlete at Riverside, served as Dave's top assistant.

According to Jerry, "It was just interesting watching him in action. I think he had a great sense of public service. He believed in running government for the benefit of the average person." That was because Dave was an eastsider. It was in the neighborhood gene pool.

Dave left behind his wife Jo Ann and his young son Bobby. At the time of his passing, Dave was an engineering professor at Northwestern and director of the Infrastructure Institute at the University.

THERE HAVE BEEN SO many *special* individuals who attended eastside high schools that I am confident we missed a few of them along the way. We apologize in advance.

St. John's Cathedral claim Woody Herman and Spencer Tracy as alums. Lincoln High had Al Jarreau and Oprah Winfrey, while Riverside is equally proud of Mike Melvoin, Colleen Dewhurst, and Michael Schultz. Meanwhile Shorewood lists actress Karen Black and Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist as their special grads.

Not to be outdone by Shorewood's famous judge, St. John's had two judges of their own, Mike Barron and Bill Jennaro.

Bill Jennaro was actually raised on the southwest side of town, yet his father ran a prosperous produce business out of the eastside's Third Ward. He's another one of our honorary eastsiders..

While freshmen, Bill met his future wife, Rita Basile, at St. John's; both graduated in 1957. He remains popular and a well-respected resident of the eastside today. Bill became a county judge in 1973 and resigned from the bench in the early '80s in order to return to private practice.

Mike Barron and his sister Kathleen grew up at 2730 N. Bartlett Avenue. Both went to St. Peter and Paul's grade school before attending St. John's. Mike served as a City Alderman before being elected to the bench in 1973. He served the state until 1999 when he retired after twenty-six years on the bench. Mike continues to reside on the eastside and has the cushy job of handing out Dixie Cups at the Fourth of July celebration in Lake Park each year.

Riverside High lays claim to two judges of their own. **Rudy (Randy) Randa** grew up across the river and was a gifted athlete at Riverside in the late '50s. His sister, Claire, graduated from East in 1954. Rudy served on the bench, holding a number of positions. His first job was as a municipal court judge for the City

of Milwaukee before taking over as a circuit court judge. In the '80s he was elected to the Wisconsin Intermediate Court of Appeals. Then in 1992 he was appointed by then President Bush, to the Federal District Court in Milwaukee where he still sits.

Terry Evans graduated from Riverside in 1958. His boyhood home was at 2818-A N 6th Street, which was located across the river. Terry and his mother eventually moved to an apartment building on the corner of Oakland and Park in 1958, smack dab in the middle of the eastside.

He was raised by his mother, Jean, a single woman who dedicated her life to her son. ... a son that turned into someone very special. Jean struggled a bit by working in the kitchen of Gaenslen School, which catered to handicapped students and had an affiliation with Riverside High.

Terry was a state champion on the tiger track team. He teamed up with Terry Pitts, Leon Williams, and Jon Malenkoff to not only win the medley relay, but they broke the state record in the process. Due to their efforts, Riverside took second place in the state meet of 1958. Before Pitts passed away early in life, he was also a Milwaukee fixture, serving as a local politician.

Terry's track prowess followed him to Marquette University where he received a track scholarship and continued to excel by breaking the school's 880 record. He also broke the half-mile record running for the Milwaukee Track Club. His athletic background helped him get through college and prepared him for his rigorous law school regimen.

When Terry left Marquette he decided to give a little back to the city and took a teaching position in the core area, namely North Division High School. It was good for him and it was even better for his students.

Next Terry worked in the DA's office after earning his law degree and then moved into private practice until 1974 when he was appointed a circuit court judge. In 1980, President Carter appointed Terry to the federal bench. In 1995 President Clinton nominated Terry to sit on the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Terry has deservedly earned the respect of the legal profession in addition to that of Milwaukee's general population.

In a recent Milwaukee Journal article, journalists John Diedrich and Marie Rhode, wrote, "Terence Evan has always been a creative judge. He once ordered attorneys suing each other to settle their beef out of court—in a one-on-one game of basketball."

"Evans built a reputation as a pragmatic judge who wrote crisp opinions and deplored wasting time in court," observers said. "He was perhaps best known for his humor and knack for weaving sports and pop music references to his opinions."

Terry's wife Jane retired in 2001 after spending over twenty years as a teacher and cheerleading coach at Shorewood High. Together Jane and Terry raised three children. Kelly, the eldest, is married to Eric Pfeifer, a native of Milwaukie, Oregon. Both Kelly and Eric live in San Francisco with their daughter, Stella. The Pfeifers are both in advertising.

Middle daughter, Christine, is also in advertising at the unique, Wexley School for Girls in the Seattle area. Married to Randy Wise, they have two children, Olivia and Henry.

Son David lives in the Los Angeles area, is single, and is employed in the movie industry as a graphic designer. David recently spent six months in Germany working on Quentin Tarantino's latest film, *Inglorious Basterds*.

Chapter Twenty

**“Things ain’t what they
used to be and probably never was.”**

Will Rogers

After the passing of a couple of generations, many of our friends have left us, while a bunch of us are still hanging around. Maybe not on Farwell and North or Oakland and Locust, but they stayed close to home because of deep roots that had a special hold on them. In the following pages you’ll get a glimpse of their lives as time refused to stand still in the shadows of the ‘50s.

FRED BRANDENBURG GRADUATED FROM Riverside in 1953 and his wife Rose from Pius High School in ’59. Fred’s boyhood home at 2117 N Newhall was only a short jaunt south of North Avenue. He has deep roots in the soul of Milwaukee and currently resides in the suburb of Brookfield.

Fred was unquestionably the greatest distance runner in Milwaukee during his years at Riverside High School. Shortly after school Fred spent two years in the US Army and upon his return to the beer Mecca, he worked as a lithographer for Miller Color Plate. In the forty years Fred spent at Miller he worked his way up the ladder from apprentice to foreman to sales rep to plant manager. After retiring, Fred’s work ethic kept right on ticking, and for the past thirteen years, he’s worn the hat of a rental specialist for Shorecrest Realty.

He remained active in sports as a successful coach of CYO basketball and Little League baseball. This brought Fred close to his two sons, Brian and Paul whom he groomed to be star athletes.

Both boys earned all-conference awards in multiple sports.

Paul went on to Ripon College where he became a two-time Division III All-American quarterback. He earned his Master's degree from UWM and currently serves as the City Manager for the City of Georgetown, Texas. He has given Fred and Rose four grandchildren to brag about.

Brian moved to Southern California where he is a vice-president for a large security company. He and his wife have given Fred and Rose two granddaughters to spoil. Both of the boys, and Fred also, continue to stay in shape; even Rose plays racquetball.

At a recent gathering of eastsiders, Fred shocked everyone by wearing his high school letter sweater that still fit after fifty-five years. While Fred works out and golfs and hunts, Rose is involved in barbershop quartets, and has captured two Midwest regional championships.

Fred has fond memories of Lake Michigan and the Milwaukee River, which were great places for young guys to learn about life. He says that the eastside was like a city within a city ... an ideal place to foster relationships with our peers and adults also. Through sports and business Fred and Rose have met and made countless new friends. Only on the eastside of Milwaukee is this so prevalent.

Fred gives his parents all of the credit for his success in life. "My parents taught me how to develop a strong work ethic, and although we didn't always agree, it is amazing how smart they got as I grew older."

WERNER BRANDENBURG CONTINUES TO RESIDE on the east side, Shorewood to be exact. With his wife Marlene, a Shorewood grad in 1956, they raised four children; Victoria,

Danielle, Lesley, and Adam. They have fourteen grandchildren and the number continues to rise.

After graduating from Riverside in '54, Werner attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison and eventually received his degree from UWM prior to attending law school in Chicago. He began working in investment banking in Chicago and moved back home to work as a trader for the Milwaukee Company. He got involved in research and would end up as a popular and successful stock broker.

Werner and Marlene met when both were students at UWM. At the time Werner was pledging a fraternity and was dressed up like one of those cigarette girls that worked at nightclubs back in the '40s and '50s. He looked kind of cute with a little pink apron and blond wig as he cascaded about in his best female impersonation. At the time Marlene wanted no part of him, but it wasn't long before the two were dating and getting sort of serious.

Marlene worked at Columbia Hospital for a while, but dedicated her life and time to her children. She was a regional director for the girl scouts, and according to Werner and the kids, she is a phenomenal cook. Despite retiring, Werner remains active, especially at the Milwaukee Athletic Club and traveling. He is also the proud and lucky owner of season tickets for both University of Wisconsin football and the Green Bay Packers football.

JOE SUTTER, RIVERSIDE CLASS OF '56, with his brother Jim and sister Sandi grew up at 2407 N. Farwell, which was known to all as the carwash across the street from Maryland playground. Joe remained close to his roots, now residing in the suburb of Greenfield.

Joe was a star football player and pole-vaulter at Riverside. He

would go on to play semi-pro football in the Milwaukee area and competed many years for the Milwaukee Track Club.

Joe, following in his father's footsteps, joined the Milwaukee Police Department right after high school. He methodically worked his way up the ranks before retiring as a Lieutenant. Joe spent many years training the police recruits at Milwaukee's Police Academy.

Joe was instrumental in organizing the East Side Decathlon, which was a gathering of the old timers, anywhere from thirty to fifty one-time jocks for a day of athletics and camaraderie held annually at the Lake Park Track and later at Riverside High School. The award presentation was held in the evening at numerous venues; from Hubbard Lodge to Kalts to Century Hall and Champion's Pub.

Joe and his wife, Nancy, deceased in 1995, raised two children, Joey and Jill. Joe spends as much of his free time with his grandchildren as he can, besides traveling up to his retreat in Door County and his condo in Florida. Joe and Bill Clark have ridden their bicycles countless times up to Door County and then back too.

Joe and his companion, Sue Breier, former Bay View alderwoman and daughter of the former chief of police, travel together and enjoy each other's company.

Joe has a pocketful of memories of the eastside like, Bradford Beach and his buddy Dick Bacon and the ravines in Lake Park and Riverside Park. He added that growing up in the 50s allowed us to go anywhere we wanted and never worry about gangs or perverts. Joe lists his role models as his dad, Bill Clark, Pete Kamuchey, and Vince Partipillo. Joe's mom and dad were actively involved in his life and were close to all of our eastside chums.

Brother Jim lives in upstate New York. Jim was an art professor at Pottsdam State University in New York before retiring in 2004. He got his start in art by winning a Milwaukee Journal contest and having his drawing displayed in their annual calendar. Galleries in New York and Florida proudly display his sculptures.

Jim has twins born the day before Armstrong made his famous landing on the moon. Shannon is a teacher in the DC area and Jason, an accomplished drummer, lives in Hollywood and has appeared on Leno and Letterman.

Jim and Leslie divide their time with stays at their home and studio in New York to their condo in Florida and their apartment on the Thames outside of London.

Sandi lives in Hollywood, Florida and is a telemarketer. Though she's had some close calls, she has remained single all these years. Sandy was a constant companion of their beloved mother who passed away in 1994. Sandy keeps an eye on Joe and Jim's condo that is located in the same complex that she lives in.

JIM FLYNN AND HIS BROTHERS, Eddie, Tommy, and Dennis grew up at 2716 N. Oakland. His maternal grandfather was Barney Retzer, proprietor of the popular neighborhood grocery store. Jimmy graduated from Messmer High School in '59.

He is ecstatic over the fact that he was one of the few guys in the neighborhood that wasn't hired by American Motors. Instead, Jim was hired as a City of Milwaukee fireman. He worked for a while at the station on the corner of Bartlett and Park Place (smack dab in the middle of our neighborhood) and also the station on Brady Street. Through hard work, Jim worked his way up the ladder to captain.

After retiring, he packed up his belongings and headed south to

the “good old boy” community of Harrison, Arkansas. Jim has a nice spread and needs a golf cart to get him from one end of his property to the other.

Like so many eastsiders, Jimmy continues to work out and is currently on the threshold of earning a black belt in karate. When he isn’t working out or tending to his property, Jim jumps in his car and heads a few miles down the road to Branson, Missouri where he enjoys the atmosphere.

Jimmy has precious memories of Maryland playground because you could see every eastsider there if you stayed long enough. He always had that special feeling that the eastside was “ours” and you couldn’t walk a block without running into someone that you knew.

Younger brother, **Tom Flynn** was arguably the best and most famous of our eastside athletes. Today Tommy lives with his wife Tanja in the Indianapolis suburb of Carmel, Indiana. Together they nurtured two children, Christina and Michael, both college graduates and kind and helpful like their mother.

Tom is retired after spending thirty-two years as a special agent for the FBI, a job that brought the Flynnns to Washington DC, Portland, Oregon, San Francisco, Monterey, New Jersey (he worked in Manhattan), and finally to Indiana. In retirement, Tom has found time to teach criminology at Butler University.

Tom earned a name for himself at Messmer High School as both a student and a gifted athlete and from there he went to Marquette University where he earned his B.A. and J.D. while starring on the famed Warrior basketball team. Tom was a three-time MVP and twice the captain of Marquette’s team. He was the fifth leading career rebounder and was ninth in career scoring average. He agonized his way through law school as an assistant

coach under the famous Al McGuire.

Tom's memories of the east side are many, like his first homerun at Maryland Playground and beating George Kanz in a game of H-O-R-S-E for a nickel a game while in seventh grade and George on Riverside's varsity team. He knew every inch of Maryland's slanted basketball court and enjoyed watching the old guys like Peter Kamuchey and Jim Hanley play softball and football in Riverside Park.

Tom learned all about humility, the Great Depression, and dads that drank. He learned about being tough or at least acting tough. He learned that if you stood in front of someone's home and yelled, "Oh for Johnny," that eventually they would come out and play with you. And he learned that if he tried to hang out with his older brothers and their friends that they were fast enough to "ditch" him.

Tommy's role models were his parents and brothers along with his ninth-grade nun at St. Pete's, Sister Vincent. His coaches at Messmer, Bob Neja and Don Simeth; and at Marquette, Hank Raymonds, Eddie Hickey, Al McGuire and trainer Bob Weingart. Jim Hanley with the Milwaukee Track Club and some of the Jesuits at Marquette, in addition to a number of his FBI associates, were also looked up to.

Tom bakes cookies and Irish Soda bread, was an altar boy and he taught Sunday school. He is a frequent blood platelet donor, having completed more than 225 double platelet donations. He calculates that he has spent six to eight forty-hour workweeks bleeding.

Tom doesn't dwell on his failings, but they are there. Nor does he focus on the times that he took the "easy" road or failed to speak up when he should have, or the times he left people without

coming to their aid as he should have, or the young people that he failed to treat with respect when he was young. Then there were the times when he opted to seek to be understood instead of to understand, or when he failed to show compassion or was in too much of a hurry to help someone.

Like all of us, Tom has neglected to tell the people who loved or cared for him just how much he appreciated them and unfortunately some of them are gone forever.

WAYNE WOLSKI GREW UP at 1517 E. Riverside Place. He was a running back on Marquette High School's undefeated 1963 football team. He played college football at UWM. Afterwards he played and partied for five years with the Milwaukee Rugby Club before moving with his wife and three children (Kevin, Erika, and Sheila) to pursue the California dream.

His family's eastside roots go back to the 1880s. Each summer Wayne spends a few weeks back on the eastside, hoping for one more big smelt run at the McKinley Marina, looking for old teammates, and patrolling old haunts like the Oriental Lanes, Axel's on Oakland, Wolski's on Pulaski, and Hallidays on Farwell.

Wayne has been an attorney in Northern California for the past twenty-three years, following shorter careers as a community college English/journalism teacher, sports information director at UWM, and a reporter for the *LaCrosse Tribune*. Wayne admits to abundant mistakes over his sixty-three years, some of them fairly spectacular, but he also claims one Olympic moment: marrying the former Mary McCormick who sat next to him at Holy Rosary Grade School and always won the spelling bee.

WARREN ADAMEAK GREW UP at 3042 N. Oakland Avenue.

Warren (he goes by Mike today) was one of Riverside High's most celebrated athletes. He was a star football and basketball player besides shining as a baseball player for Cudworth Post in the American Legion League. Back in the early 50s there were no high school baseball teams in the city

Warren went to UW Madison where he played freshman football. He spent the next three years at UW LaCrosse where he earned his B.S. degree. Warren played football at LaCrosse and was the starting quarterback and defensive back in his senior year. Warren would later earn his M.S. from UWM.

Warren, now retired, lives in Menomonee Falls where he worked at the high school for thirty-eight years. He started out as a PE teacher and coach before taking over as a guidance director and counselor at the school. For the last forty-six years Warren officiated both high school football and basketball, once officiating the state final in both sports. He continues to work as an official to this date.

He married Marlene forty-eight years ago and together they raised three children; Lauren, Sharen, and Ryan, all college graduates. The Adameaks have five grandchildren to spoil and they're all boys. Warren might even come out of retirement to coach his grandsons. Speaking of coaches, Riverside's successful football coach Pat Wagner, who was named Wisconsin's Coach of the Year, was one of Warren's former counselees at Menomonee Falls High School.

Before their retirement Marlene worked as an Optometric Assistant and also as an orchid specialist at a Menomonee Falls nursery. With three young ones she wore the hat of a domestic engineer. Now the Adameaks find time to travel.

Warren has wonderful memories of his youth, especially the

times and the friends he met through sports. Bartlett Avenue playground consumed countless hours, shooting buckets, playing softball, touch football, or simply hanging out. Riverside High was special to him, so diverse, and the neighborhood was blessed with easy access to parks, the lakefront, and downtown. His role models were Bill Cross (football and officiating), Jimmy Fallon and Spence Potter (football), and John Hafey (basketball).

BILLY GEE, RIVERSIDE CLASS OF ‘69 grew up at 2939 N. Cramer. Bill was another gifted athlete, starting in football and basketball for the Tigers. His mentor was Pete Kamuchey who helped hone his skills on the proving grounds of Bartlett Avenue Playground.

After leaving Riverside Bill matriculated to UW LaCrosse where he played frosh football. After two years the money ran out and he returned to the eastside to finish his schooling and receive his BS from UWM.

Billy and his bride Betty have two sons, Brian 29, and Brendan 28. A chip off the old block, Brendan was a starter on Whitefish Bay’s 1998 state championship basketball team. Brendan earned his college degree at Lake Forest College and Brian from the University of Kentucky.

No one personifies an eastsider more than Bill Gee does. He is Mr. Eastside despite living in Mequon as he makes endless journeys each week to those hallowed grounds he grew up on.

His major achievements are being married to the same bride for over thirty-one years, watching both of Warren Spahn’s no-hitters, and a paper Wisconsin driver’s license that is concealed in his safety deposit box bearing autographs from both Joe DiMaggio and George Blanda. He is proud of the minus 45 yards rushing he

had for East Division while trying to pass in a game against Boy's Tech that they lost 41 to 0.

Betty's memorable moments were marching in the famed St. Patrick's Day Parade in NYC, and as an eighth grader, attending JFK's funeral. Betty & Bill were married in a real estate office in Arlington, Virginia.

Bill is a retired national sales manager for a large corporation, which necessitated frequent moves. Bill has called LaCrosse, WI; Acton, MA, Lincolnshire, ILL and Whitefish Bay, WI home. He spends a couple of days each week walking with John Fitch some three miles to Hooligan's on the east side and lunching at the VIP table where Mr. East Side holds court. He also has a generous and growing collection of eastside memorabilia. The large den in his pretentious home is dedicated to Coach Jimmy Fallon and Dave Schulz.

His fondest memories include sitting at the soda fountain of the Economy Drugs and summer afternoons on Bartlett Playground playing every imaginable game.

Growing up in the 50s and 60s meant you lived in "real" neighborhoods that were occupied by long-time residents and learning how to play without supervision and the interference of adults. We had access to a group of wizened parents who truly were the last great generation.

Bill's role models were Lombardi's Packers, and the one thing we never knew about Bill was the fact that he earned a B in Ms. Kunkel's Ballroom Dance Class in 1969 at UW LaCrosse. Warren (Mike) Adameak took the very same class some twelve years earlier.

MIKE (GETTELMAN) BALISTER'S BOYHOOD HOME was

just off Newberry Boulevard at 2757 N. Cramer. He was another charter member of the Bartlett Avenue School/Riverside High School fraternity.

Mike and his wife Lorraine currently reside just outside of Milwaukee in Germantown. Together the Balisters raised five children, Lisa, Gina, Sam, Dean, and John.

Mike retired from Evinrude but finds time to join the Breakfast Club of Riverside graduates who meet once a month to rehash the past and look forward to the future. Mike Prosser is the impetus that keeps the group coming back each month.

Mike's role models were Peter Kamuchey, Warren "Ace" Adameak, and Norm Shecterle; he envied their innate gift of athletic skills. Like everyone else, Mike loved growing up in the '50s and the '60s since stress was nonexistent, nor was there any peer pressure to use drugs. Shoot, you never had to worry about walking down an alley as a shortcut to get somewhere.

Among Mike's treasured memories are the big fire at Cornell Paper, the end of World War II, jumping from one garage roof to another, volleyball at Bradford Beach, shoveling snow off the basketball court at Bartlett Avenue School, pizza at Vitucci's, taking the number 10 streetcar across the viaduct, playing sheepshead with Father Schuster at St. Pete's for cigarettes, and losing all of them.

Mike adds that his bout with polio left him with a few reminders of that horrible epidemic back in the '40s. Mike has lopsided shoulders, two different sized shoes, and one leg shorter than the other. He had a problem in his fifties when the bones in his feet had a tendency to break. He felt that it was brought on by the polio weakening his tendons and unable to support the bones properly.

THE CINCOTTA BOYS; ROCCO, TOM, AND SANTO grew up at 1919 N. Oakland. Paul Williams lived in their upstairs flat; Marian Catania and Tom Balestreri lived across the street, and the Ketchums a few doors down.

Their mother and father were Italian immigrants and proud to be American. The boys were raised as good Catholics and attended Holy Rosary Elementary School before matriculating to Riverside High where they all played football.

Rocco is a Milwaukee legend, a title earned by his flair for selling automobiles to his eastside cronies as well as a large clientele of non-eastsiders. He retired from Phil Tolkan and Gordy Boucher's, tired from the day-to-day grind.

He and his wife Nancy reside in Brookfield where they raised three children: Joe, Susan, and Mindy. They thoroughly enjoy spending the winter at their condo in Scottsdale, Arizona. Rocco just might come out of retirement if any of you want to buy a car.

After graduating from high school Tom did his duty by spending a couple of years in the military. He got a free pass to visit the Orient on behalf of Uncle Sam.

When Tom returned to Milwaukee, he started a family of his own. Vickie and Tom came first and after Tom moved to Southern California, Anthony was born.

He was the affable bartender at the popular Embers on Milwaukee's eastside, as well as other bistros around Milwaukee and Southern California. Tom suffered a stroke while living in Milwaukee and moved west again to be closer to family. Tom currently retired, and healthy after the stroke, resides in the High Desert community of Lancaster. He takes the train into Los Angeles once every week to have coffee and rekindle the good old

days with Jim Hanley and Mike Melvoin.

Santo, the youngest of the Cincotta clan and another of Riverside's great quarterbacks lives in Florida, but not for long. He has sold his home there and is making plans to relocate to Southern California like brother Tom.

Santo was the most artistic of the Cincottas and had quite a following around Milwaukee where he performed as a singer ... during the days of doo wop. Santo continued his career when he moved to Florida and now performs daily in his shower. Santo has remained single.

JACKIE CHIARAMONTE LA DOUCEUR lived at 1934 Bartlett Avenue just down the block from the Brandenburgs and around the corner from the Cincotta's. Jackie went from Holy Rosary to Riverside where she graduated in 1953 and with her diploma in hand, she left for California with her family. The Chiaramontes settled in the desert community of Banning where dad took over a trailer court along with a gas station and a small grocery store.

When the 1-10 Freeway was widened around 1957, it wiped out the trailer park. So the Chiaramonte's bought a restaurant across the freeway from the trailer park. The traveling Italians converted it into an Italian restaurant/pizza house and started serving beer and wine.

Years later Jackie moved to La Quinta, adjacent to Palm Springs where she bought a gas station. Besides raising her family, spoiling her children and grandchildren, Jackie continued working because it was her nature. By the way, Jackie raised five children; Sally, Sammy, Andy, Teri, and Barbara. This was a love affair Italian style.

According to her bother, Ed, Jackie loved everybody and everybody that met Jackie loved her. For Jackie, life was a passion. “When we were kids, I remember that she loved to swim and enjoyed hunting for night crawlers for their fishing trips to Waupaca.”

“One thing Jackie loved was riding around in a convertible. Even later in life when someone drove into her gas station with the convertible top up Jackie would order them to exit the car. ‘Why, they’d ask?’ And Jackie’s response was, ‘no one is allowed to drive in a convertible with the top up on a sunny day. And if you do, I’ll take your car.’”

We got together with Jackie before Christmas in ’08 to have her input for our book, and two weeks later, she was taken from her loving family and us. They just don’t make ‘em like Jackie any more.

H. LAURY LEPAGE GREW UP at 1802 E Park Place, which was on the corner of Oakland and Park and directly across the street from the Snyder residence. Laury, another of the Bartlett/Riverside group, graduated from Riverside in ’53 and because of his size, he was the starting center on the basketball team and a lifeguard at McKinley Beach on the shore of Lake Michigan. He broke the record for the city lifeguard rowing competition, going from the government pier to the northern edge of Bradford Beach under thirteen minutes.

Laury was one of the few individuals that owned a car in high school and it was a beauty; a two-tone brown ’52 Packard two door with a straight eight and an external sun visor. He was the envy of the neighborhood.

He went on to UWM where he competed on the track and swim

teams. He earned his “W” that was the same one issued to UW Madison athletes and he went right out and purchased a white sweater before strutting around town showing off his “W” like it was one from Madison.

He retired from UW LaCrosse in '96 and resides in Nisswa, Minnesota. Like so many of us, Laury placed education high on his list of priorities. He has spent most of his life in the field of education starting as a teaching assistant at the grad school at Northern Illinois; instructor at the graduate school at Winona State University; assistant professor at the graduate school and senior psychologist at the counseling and testing center at the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse.

With his wife Marilyn, affectionately referred to as “Killer,” the two enjoyed raising their offspring, Shari and David. Shari has a law firm in Wisconsin and David owns Big Wood Timber Frames, a post and beam construction company.

Laury has led an active life when not in the classroom. He had a relationship with a Harley, attending rallies in Sturgis as well as the Harley Reunions in Milwaukee. He skied, sailed, and he traveled far and wide. He has suffered through two artificial knees and a torn Achilles, which has put a damper on the active aspect of retirement.

Now he claims to run herd on his six granddaughters and their four dogs. He reflects upon those chocolate sundaes at Plotkin's Deli and the ten-cent hamburgers at the Owl. He smiles over the weekend gatherings at the Pig 'n Whistle and the after the game dances at Plymouth Church. Best of all, Laury remembers parking above Lake Drive where the cops never patrolled.

Laury calls Albert Schweitzer an inspiration for his humanistic philosophy and his dear sweet German grandfather as his role

model, the most kind and caring man that ever lived.

PETER KAMUCHEY LIVED AT 1714 E. Park Place with his two brothers and six sisters. To say that Peter was a great athlete would be an understatement. He was an All-City end in football and an All-City forward in basketball. He was a track star at Riverside as a pole vaulter, high jumper and hurdler and a gifted baseball player, chess player, ping pong, just plain good at any activity he tried.

Pete was looked up to by all of his fellow jocks and became a role model to young aspiring athletes from the east side. Pete spent two years at UWM, starring on their basketball team before doing his duty in the Marine Corp. When he returned, he took a job at Pabst Brewery from which he eventually retired before moving to Port Charlotte, Florida where he now resides.

Peter and his wife Susan, also a Bartlett/Riverside gal, raised three boys; Andrew, Christopher, and Dean. Andy was All Metro Conference in basketball and played professionally in Europe. Today he runs his own construction company. Christopher was a high school athlete and today owns a landscaping business. As a freshman, Dean was a starter on Marquette High's undefeated basketball team. After graduating from college Dean went on to become a chiropractor and currently has his own practice in Spain.

Pete was always a playground rat and loved working with young kids that weren't gifted animals; Billy Gee was one of his many protégés. He loved to watch kids succeed. He even coached boy's and girl's basketball at Holy Assumption School in West Allis, Wisconsin.

He loved the bonding friendships with his neighborhood pals. Friends like Jim Hanley, Bill Clark, Vince Partipello, Ricky Dorsch,

Dave Ladwig, Eddie Pinzer, Don Bader, and a host of others. Pete's role model was Vic Jones, a basketball star at East four or five years before our time and the owner of Victor's, a popular club in Milwaukee. Pete thought so much of Vic that he wore his number thirteen jersey throughout his playing days.

He reflects on the '40s and '50s as a blue-collar environment with God, family, and country. We always watched out for one another and were willing to lend a helping hand whenever the need arose.

BILLY KAMUCHEY WHIPP IS THE youngest of the nine Kamuchey kids that grew up at 1714 E. Park Place. He legally changed his surname years ago to Whipp, a literal translation of Kamuchey.

Bill followed in the footsteps of his two older brothers as a Riverside athlete, quarterbacking the Tiger football team. He went on to college, earned a BS Degree from UW LaCrosse and became a schoolteacher. Then the travel bug viciously bit him.

Bill has since traveled around the world, residing in Sydney, Australia; Christchurch, New Zealand; London (Wimbledon), England; Chicago, San Jose, and New York City.

He was the owner operator of a Java Express Coffee Shop prior to retiring. He currently calls Cold Spring, New York home.

In retirement he has little free time because he's completely occupied with his passions of reading, attending Broadway shows, theater productions, and daily journeys to his local health spa. He also loves taking long walks.

His role models are Buddha and two Alberts, Einstein and Schweitzer. Bill's memories of the Eastside are many.

"Even though we didn't have a lot of money, we were rich in

character.”

“I remember how wonderful Lake Michigan along Lake Park was. The walk through the ravines from our home on Park Place was nature at its finest. Then suddenly seeing that beautiful lake appear before our eyes was like manna from heaven. We would swim an entire afternoon out near the water intake rock, lying on our backs, sculling as we talked and we laughed, pretending that sharks were attacking us. Then we would swim like crazy to beat the sharks to shore. Our parents never worried about where we were or what we were doing. We were safe in the hands of Mother Nature located at a place called Bradford Beach on our beloved Eastside.”

DON HAYDEN ALSO LEFT Riverside in June of 1952 with a diploma in hand. His boyhood home was 2537 N. Downer Avenue, apartment 14, which was just south of the famous Downer Theater that to this day, continues to play classic movies.

Don is a physician living just outside of Sacramento in Carmichael, California. With his wife Scottie’s most capable hands, the Haydens raised seven children; Don JR., Mark, Scott, Chris, Julie, Sean, and Heather. Five graduated from college and the other two had a couple of years before becoming successful in the business world. Three of their sons are in the medical field.

Don earned his B.S. in psychology from UWM and his M.D. from the University of California Medical School in San Francisco. Don spent two tours in the Navy and served as the Chief Ob- Gyn at the Naval Hospital in Connecticut. In between his private practice, Don worked for Kaiser Hospital in Sacramento as well as the Sutter Hospitals.

Don is delighted over his choice for a wife. Scottie was the

valedictorian of her class at a large Catholic school in Providence, Rhode Island. She expertly blended being a mother, a gourmet cook, and a mother confessor to her brood. Everyone loves Scottie.

Don and Scottie have always been lovers of the stage and screen. In '76 they were cast into Gershwin's, "Of Thee I sing." Neither had any background but they experienced a real high; show biz was in their blood and the show was a success in Sacramento. Next it was "The Cherry Orchard" with a student from Sacramento State by the name of Tom Hanks. Tom was discovered in this performance and the rest was history and it was the thrill of a lifetime for the acting Haydens.

Don's role models included Pastor Fedders at Lake Park Lutheran, his aunt, grandmother, and his dad. Riverside's principal, Mr. Lean, Gwen Greco, Mr. Wood, Alvin Dark, Harvey Kuehn, Alan Ladd, and Tyrone Power also made the list.

"Milwaukee was an ideal place and ours was an ideal time for us to grow up. The recent depression and the war provided us with a commonality of privilege and purpose. We were better able to understand each other because of our mutual problems. Family stability was to our benefit. The schools provided more with smaller staffs. Milwaukee's unique history as a melting pot, its work ethic, strong traditions, clean politics, solid religious base, and beautiful park system, not to mention its great libraries and public museum, all offered an ideal community experience. "

ROGER BEAUMONT GREW UP at 2578 N. Prospect. He went from Maryland Avenue Grade School to Riverside, graduating with the class of 1953. He didn't stop there. He went directly to the University of Wisconsin Extension School in Milwaukee for two years before transferring to the Madison, Wisconsin campus

where he received his B.S. in 1958 and his M.S. in 1960. He eventually earned his Ph.D. from Kansas State University; all of his degrees were in History.

After spending several years in a UWM-based *think tank* and adjunct teaching at Marquette and Wisconsin, Roger eventually traveled to College Station, Texas where he taught history at Texas A and M University from 1974 until retirement in 2003.

Roger joined the *publish or perish* fraternity with a prolific compilation of books, monographs, and articles. He and his wife Penny, a retired academic administrator, are currently collaborating on the soon to be published, *Imperial Divas: the Vicereines of India*.

Around the mid '50s Beaumont served as an NCO in the Army Reserves, while in the late '50s and early '60s he was on Active Army tours as an officer. Roger was a guest lecturer and consultant on defense related matters in Europe and the USA and was Secretary of the Navy Fellow at the US Naval Academy from 1989 to 1990. He was also the co-founder of a journal, *Defense Analysis*.

Roger has been a long-standing member of the Science Fiction Writers of America and has learned to enjoy painting in his studio and collecting rare stamps.

His son, Eric, is the librarian at the Milwaukee County Jail and has a following on the Milwaukee music scene where he is known as Eric Blowtorch. Daughter Anne is a partner in a New York law firm; the other, Katherine, and her husband, Greg, are administrators in social service agencies in Bryan, Texas.

JOHN HANLEY, THE MIDDLE OF the three Hanley boys, was raised at 2711 N. Newhall Street. John was saddled with growing

up in his older brother's shadow and trying to dispel the misconception that they were made from the same mould. You see, John was a very good student and was almost never in trouble.

John was on the football and wrestling teams at Riverside, but he was first and foremost a student and a very good one at that. After graduating from Riverside in less than four years in 1957, John and his good friend Bobby Kaltenbach enlisted in the Navy on the buddy system. John did his basic training in San Diego and upon completion he was stationed at the Naval Hospital in Philadelphia.

The Navy became a stepping-stone in John's educational development by nurturing a desire and a passion for the field of medicine and healing.

After his military career ended, he returned to Milwaukee with his bride Linda, again settling in on the eastside. This was the only time that John had lived outside of the city of Milwaukee. When he returned, you'd think that he would crave some of Grandma Romano's prize-winning lemon pie, a feast on local beers, or a platter of sausages. No, that wasn't what he missed the most. You see, John missed the good old cold Milwaukee tap water.

John continued to attend classes at UWM while working as an operating room technician. His daughter Laura was born and immediately made a positive impact on the Hanley clan and still does forty some years later. Laura considers herself a bona fide Eastsider and knows it like the back of her hand.

John eventually moved on to the mental health field and became a counselor for mentally challenged adults, namely the autistic. He has been blessed with enough compassion to perform his job in a caring and objective fashion. Upon breaking his hip in

a fall, John was forced into retirement from a position he loved so dearly.

He continues to reside on the eastside and spends his time reading, which he has enjoyed since his youth. A journey into Schwartz's Bookstore is like a vacation for John. Trips to the Oriental and the Downer Theater to see the movies of the week also take up his free time. He is a trivia buff and an aficionado of the Seinfeld Show. He is a diehard Packer and Brewer fan, one year attending fifty-four Brave's games, some of which he actually paid the admission.

John honors the neighborhood mothers as his role models. They were strong, resilient, possessed more than their share of wisdom, and ran their households like a Swiss watch. Women like Betty Cook, Amber Wettstein, and Gladys Romano head his list.

He looks back to the '50s with a special fondness. "Simply walking around the eastside was an experience in itself. You knew practically everyone you passed on the street and they knew you as well, oftentimes more than you may have wanted. It was an atmosphere of closeness, much like a small town in a big city. "Regretfully all that remain from the '50s are wonderful memories."

THE WETTSTEINS LIVED at 1609 E Riverside place. Their home was sandwiched between the McClellan's and the Grossman homes and directly across the street from Riverside Park. They had a "birds' eye view" of everything that went on in the fabled park. **Patty** was the eldest and graduated from Riverside in 1950. She married, moved to Texas and passed away in 2007.

Gil and his wife Sharon moved to Baltimore to run a family business, a large cemetery. They have four children, Kevin, Mark,

Holly, and Christopher. Gil is now retired and spends his time between his two beautiful homes, one located in Baltimore and the other in Fort Meyers, Florida. Gil graduated from Riverside in 1954 and was a member of their track team.

Penny lives on the northwest side of Milwaukee and her daughter lives in the suburb of Greenfield with her husband. Penny is also retired.

Gordie and **Ralph** were the twins. **Gordy** has finally retired in Hartford Wisconsin after spending his career in management. Gordy and wife Helen have two sons, Jeff and Mike. Gordy also has two-step children, Kim and Brian. Brian is a teacher and a successful football coach at Cedarburg High School.

Ralph lives off Oakland Avenue and simply refuses to leave the eastside. He is often referred to as Mr. Eastside, a title he deserves and one that he is most proud of. Every eastsider, both young and old, know Ralph and his affable and happy to be alive nature.

Ralph was one of the first members of the Milwaukee Track Club and was instrumental in the development of the East Side Decathlon. However, his real claim to fame came as the friendly and sociable bartender at the Tuxedo, which was a hangout on Downer Avenue and only a few blocks from the UWM campus. He was the drawing card and the pulse of the eastside.

Ralph spent a number of years taking care of his ailing mother Amber and made her final years delightful because of his tender-loving care. You may find Ralph almost any day of the week at the Pick and Save Store on Oakland Avenue in Shorewood where he works as their greeter and PR guy.

THE TABAKS, TYRONE, FRED, AND SHELDON (Earl) grew up at the fourplex at 2704 N. Newhall Street, which has since been

razed to make room for the tennis courts on Riverside's enlarged campus. The Tabak boys were gifted athletes and learned early in life about the importance of hard work.

Tyrone was the eldest of the three boys and starred in football and basketball and track at Riverside. During his senior year his family relocated to Miami where he continued to excel in sports. Tyrone attended a number of colleges and finally garnered his degree from Marquette.

Today he lives and continues to work as a stockbroker in Las Vegas. His eldest son **Mark** was also a gifted athlete at both Riverside and Shorewood High School and was given the name of *the Fish that saved Riverside* and *the Fish that saved Shorewood* because of his prowess on Riverside's and Shorewood's swim team. Mark is a commercial real estate agent in Sacramento, California. Tyrone's daughter, Jodie, is the PR person for Milwaukee's mayor. Tyrone raised a second family after moving to Las Vegas. His sons are: Matty, Jarrett, and Winston.

Fred Tabak was an All-City basketball player at Riverside and earned acclaim as a popular and long-time Supervisor for the County of Milwaukee. Fred continues to practice law in Milwaukee and is proud about fathering an infant child after reaching his sixth decade. Fred has five children; like dad, Shana is an attorney, Marissa a social worker, Rachel a teacher. Jacob is a computer geek, while three-year-old Eliana is the apple of his eye.

He competed in track and basketball at Carroll College prior to receiving his degree from Marquette's Law School. Besides playing daddy, Fred travels the states to compete in chess tournaments, a love affair that got its start on Bartlett Avenue Playground. Along with the Weldon family, Fred holds title to Eastside's very own Bobby Fisher.

Sheldon (Earl) the youngest of the Tabak boys passed away twenty years ago, far too early and was at the time a very successful businessman and real estate broker in La Jolla, California. Earl's wife Sharon continues to reside in the La Jolla area and his daughter Lauren is married and lives in the Bay area. Earl graduated from Washington High School after his parents relocated on Milwaukee's Westside.

NED WHITCOMB'S BOYHOOD home was at 2960 Maryland, which is only a few doors south of the ever-growing UWM campus. His older brother Lee graduated from Riverside in 1951 and was a notable golfer and cross-country runner. He is a retired banker and a golf teaching pro. His younger sister, Joyce graduated in 1955 and was a gifted athlete as well holding a position of a golf pro for some time. Joyce is currently a medical transcriber living in Pennsylvania and striving for a 200 average in bowling.

Ned graduated from Riverside in 1953 where he played football, basketball, and golfed, at one time holding a six handicap. Ned was busy as a youth. Like so many, he had a Sentinel route and caddied during the summer months. He held title as the Caddy Master at the Milwaukee Country Club and was a counselor for a couple of summers at the Red Arrow Camp.

Ned received a Chick Evans Caddy scholarship, which he took full advantage of. He used it to attend the University of Wisconsin in Madison where he received his BS and MD degrees. He did his residency in pediatrics at the University of Oregon's School of Medicine.

Ned's field of expertise is as an allergist with a specialty in pediatrics. He has received innumerable certifications, held some lofty positions, and earned prestigious awards, besides teaching at

UC Davis. Somehow Ned found time to join the Air Force Reserves as a Flight Surgeon and the Chief of the Allergy Section at Travis Air Force Base as well as a Commander of an Air Force Medical Reserve Unit. He retired from the Air Force in 1995 as a full Colonel.

Ned married the lovely Beverly Honstein in 1961 and together they raised four daughters; Deborah, Cynthia, Elizabeth, and Angela. They have been residents of Carmichael, a suburb of Sacramento, since the '70s.

Ned is proud of Beverly, claiming that she's not only a fantastic mother and grandmother, but she is his office nurse and has it running like a fine-tuned machine.

His daughter Deborah is an attorney in Sacramento and a Yoga instructor to boot. Cynthia is a drug rep and holds an MBA. She is the mother of two adorable daughters. Elizabeth holds a Master's Degree in nursing, specializing in newborn intensive care. She is the mother of three boys. Angela, an RN, has a daughter and two sons. She is active in her kids' sports, and hers as well, having just run in the Boston Marathon. Ned and Beverly have done well.

"I remember all of the football and baseball games we all enjoyed in the vacant lots around the neighborhood without any adult supervision. It was great walking to school and eating lunch at home. We had teachers that cared about us and most of our classmates we knew from kindergarten."

My brother Lee and his friends were my role models along with my math teachers and the guys on our sports teams at Riverside.

"I look back at our life on the Eastside and feel fortunate to have been a part of it."

JOHN WEINSTOCK WAS YET ANOTHER member of the Bartlett to Riverside fraternity. The Weinstock's home was located at 3007 N. Cramer, which was little more than a stone's throw from Bartlett Avenue School.

John was a valued member of the Tiger golf team coached by John Hafey. He was always an excellent student and continues to consider and honor his teachers by referring to them as his role models. He has fond memories of his favorite math teacher, Miss Henry,

"I recall visiting her after a couple of years of college to tell her about stuff I learned that she, no doubt, knew better than I did."

After graduating from Riverside, John made the move to Madison and the University of Wisconsin where he eventually earned a coveted PhD. His next and final step on the educational ladder was the University of Texas where he has been a distinguished professor since 1966 and is still going.

At Texas John started the Scandinavian Studies Program in addition to authoring a number of books and articles on the subject. His most recent writing project focused on the prehistory of the Sami, the indigenous people of Scandinavia.

John and his wife, the former Elizabeth "Beth" Brotherton, and their family reside on a ranch in Dripping Springs, Texas. Elizabeth is an artist, a musician, and a homemaker for the past twenty some years.

John had two children from his first marriage; Chris was a vice president for Countrywide and recently opened a law firm. Sigrid teaches math at a private school in Annapolis. Erin, Beth's daughter and John's stepdaughter is a flight instructor in Tacoma and married to a USAF pilot.

Alex is John's son from a brief second marriage, while Stella is

Beth and John's daughter. Yozha is their young son that they adopted from Russia in 2004. His given name is Sergei, but in Russia you don't use given names for youngsters. Instead, they use pet names or nicknames. His was Syeryozha, so the Weinstocks dropped the first syllable to make it easier. In school he goes by Josef.

John lived in France for two years and in Iceland and Norway for a year. He regularly makes journeys to Scandinavia and remains active by cycling and walking and working on his ranch.

John adds, "Growing up during the '50s and '60s, Milwaukee was small enough to retain a sense of community but large enough to offer a great deal of culture of various varieties."

John's sister Nancy followed John and graduated from Riverside in 1956. She lives in Scottsdale, Arizona with her hubby Phil Mongan, a retired pharmaceutical industry executive. The Mongans have a son and two daughters, all of them married with a total of eight grandchildren.

RICH CIRA GREW UP AT 2570 N. Newhall, a few doors down from Schwartz's grocery store. They eventually moved to 1718 E. Windsor, which was across the street from Holy Rosary. The move put Rich in the Lincoln High School district where he found himself in unfamiliar surroundings.

They eventually moved back into the Riverside district so his younger brothers Hilary (Snooky), Steve, and Jim would be able to attend and graduate from Riverside.

Rich graduated from Lincoln in 1951 and went on to UWM where he earned two letters in track to go along with his degree. He eventually got his master degree in education and the love of his life, his wife Gloria. In the interim, he served two years in the

Army during the Korean conflict. Rich and Gloria have been man and wife for over fifty years and together they raised two daughters, Valerie and Michelle.

He taught school in several elementary schools around Milwaukee before the urge to move to sunny California struck. The four Ciras hastily packed up and moved to Yorba Linda, a small and quaint suburb of Los Angeles.

Rich would teach school in Orange and Riverside County before wearing the hat of an elementary school principal. Gloria decided that she would go back to school and earn a teaching credential, which she did, as would their daughter Valerie. The Cira family all ended up working at the same school.

Valerie has given Rich and Gloria two beautiful granddaughters. Michelle is a legal secretary married to a French pastry chef who has his own restaurant in Laguna, Nigél, California.

Both of their daughters inherited Rich's work ethic that was born on Milwaukee's Eastside. At the age of ten Rich worked at Anagonos's Shoe Shop and Tailor on Oakland Avenue and a few years later he was delivering the Journal out of E-2 on North Avenue.

Rich has a closet full of memories growing up on the Eastside. Ham and rolls every Sunday from Jankowski's on Bartlett. Fishing for perch off the Government Pier on Lake Michigan and for bullheads in the Milwaukee River bring a smile to his face. He recalls sneaking in to the Oriental Theatre by walking in backwards as other patrons exited, and getting his first sled, a Flexible Flyer with runners curving up the back and proudly showing it off at Devil's Hill in Riverside Park.

Shortly after Rich arrived in California, he became disillusioned and felt an urge to return to Wisconsin. He met an old friend, a

fifth-grade classmate from Bartlett Avenue School who invited him to attend a Christian Businessman's Breakfast. Bob Sheldon asked Rich one of the most important questions of his life, "Have you accepted Christ into your life?"

Rich prayed that day and the experience influenced the entire direction of his life. He and Gloria decided to remain in California and continued to pursue their educational dreams.

"I will always cherish the memories of growing up on Milwaukee's Eastside. God has truly blessed me in this life and to those that may read my words and thoughts, may He truly bless you as well."

BILL SHEELEY GREW UP AT 2106 N. Oakland on the corner of Windsor and directly across the street from Buzzy Casamento's home. Bill went to Holy Rosary for grade school and Marquette for high school. Bill's dad was an attorney so he tried valiantly to follow a straight path, but was sometimes side-tracked by fellow eastsiders.

Like the time that he and Werner Brandenburg were watching a football game on TV when Billy Donahue ran up to the house and asked if they'd like to go for a ride in his car. Back in the '50's going for a ride in a car was a big-time thrill and better than being locked in a room with a gorgeous nymphomaniac. So the two rushed out, hopped in the car and went for a joyride.

After a half-hour or so Billy Donahue confessed to driving a stolen auto and Werner immediately demanded that he stop the car. They were in Estabrook Park at the time, so Billy pulled into an out of the way parking lot and the three musketeers hightailed it on foot. When they reached the Pig 'n Whistle on Capitol, they realized that Bill Sheeley had left his billfold with all kinds of Ids

in the purloined Ford. They rushed back, recovered the wallet and hit the road again. After that incident the boys asked more questions before getting into a strange car.

Bill attended and graduated from Marquette University. He worked in the field of Public Health for the Center for Disease Control. His first job was on Chicago's notorious southside where Bill has served as an investigator and interviewer in the syphilis eradication program. He recently retired from the Wisconsin's Division of Health—AIDS and HIV program.

Bill's lovely wife Susan is a retired child drama specialist for the Milwaukee Public Schools. The Sheeley's have raised four children. Brigid is a psychologist with a private practice; Patrick is a chef in the resort area of Minocqua, Wisconsin; David went from being a reporter for the Milwaukee Journal to a feature writer in Washington DC, while Michael works with Bill's brother John in a co2 business.

Bill and Susan spend a lot of time between family and traveling. Bill's fond memories of our beloved eastside include Caesar's Pool, Scotty's Garage, and Knoller's Drug Store. His eyes light up when the Oriental Theater is mentioned. Like the long hallway in the men's John where everyone went to smoke between movies and the much-deserved attention that Judy S, in her form-fitting sweaters, received while selling tickets in the box office.

JIM HISHMEH IS THE SPIRITUAL LEADER of the eastside despite being raised across the river, that unofficial boundary that separates the east side from the northeast side. Jim and his sister Libby were raised at 3714 N. Richards and attended Fratney Street Grade School prior to attending Riverside. Jim's mother became a friend to all of her children's cohorts and was loved by all.

Jim was a notable runner on the track team as well as a star of the Tiger football team. Shortly after graduating, Jim started his carpet business up on State Street and you can safely assume that every eastsider purchased their carpeting needs from Jim.

Jim and his lovely wife Pat, a Rufus King grad, were married in 1958 and remain happily married today. Pat met and fell for Jim at their first meeting in church when Pat was only nine years' old. Jim gave Pat a stick of Juicy Fruit Gum at that eventful day, and after sixty-some years, Pat has held on to that priceless and most treasured wrapper. At nine she knew that Jim was her guy.

Their marriage has endured and the fruits of their marriage have exceeded all expectations. Their daughter, Peg, lives in Napa, California where she serves as a county hospice nurse in addition to heading up the County Foster Home Program. Jim Junior remained in Wisconsin, and like his dad, he runs two carpet stores. Daughter Julie is a school administrator in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Their son Joe serves as the senior pastor at Topeka Bible Church in Topeka, Kansas. Joe was recently honored as he was selected to open Congress in Washington D.C. with prayer. Jim and Pat have a total of fourteen grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Jim has been a successful entrepreneur and with Pat, their parenting skills are admirable. Fellow eastsiders consult Jim on a regular basis for spiritual guidance. He possesses the qualities of goodness and integrity that regularly draw people to him.

The friendships that Jim and Pat have nurtured through the years remain stronger than ever; Jim likes referring to them as lifetime friends. His role models are Billy Graham and Ronald Reagan, while Jim serves as a role model to countless eastsiders.

About the Authors

Jim “Rabbi” Hanley

Born into an Irish/Italian heritage, the Mid-West Mecca of Milwaukee was home. Jim had a tenacious work ethic. He delivered newspapers, caddied, set pins in a bowling alley, wore the hat of a soda jerk, made paint, painted homes, cars, and the town red. His beginnings were humble.

His grandfather was Liberace’s first piano teacher and his uncle, a world-renowned psychiatrist. He took the road of sports junkie and hoodlum, spending fourteen months in the Wisconsin State Reformatory. Then he grew up and received a free college education, BS from Utah State and an MS from Southern Illinois through athletics. He represented the US in international track, once breaking the Canadian shot-put record in Winnipeg and got paid for playing football.

Besides raising six children, Christine, Scott, Valerie, Michael, Troy, and Jamie, Jim taught at the university level, high school, and junior high, as well as serving as a school administrator. He wrote for newspapers, edited a magazine, and wrote poetry. He made a career change to become a real estate broker at the perfect time. He owned four offices and a six-figure income. His estate, BMWs, and opulence tore him apart. He walked away from it all and embarked upon a spiritual journey across America, living with blacks in South Carolina, the Amish in Pennsylvania, retarded adults in Wisconsin, and the homeless on the beaches and in the alleys of Santa Monica. He ate out of trashcans and soup kitchens. A shower and a shave became luxuries. His pockets ran on empty but his soul was full.

He has since joined the working class again to support his ministries, the homeless in LA and women in California prisons. He has always remained close to his Milwaukee roots and finally has the opportunity to share it all with you.

Thelma “Queen Tillie” Kamuchey

Thelma, the seventh production of John and Erna Kamuchey, was born in a car en route to the hospital. Thelma’s mother claimed that being born in a car instilled in her a fondness for travel. Dad was a Greek immigrant and mom a German farm girl from Northern Wisconsin.

Hard work was an integral part of her life and a means to contribute to the family kitty. At fourteen she worked seven days a week as a “mother’s helper” and at sixteen she babysat and worked at a local five and ten cent store.

Thelma developed a love for athletics and at Riverside High School she shined. For her skill and her hard work, she earned her letter (the girls received an “R” while the boys earned an “E”) in three years. She was the first to earn her letter in less than four years.

In her senior year her classmates elected Thelma the Prom Queen, a really big deal for a gal. She attended Oshkosh State College with the goal of becoming a teacher, but left school after a year and a half heading for the warmth of California.

She landed in the small town of Mountain View, which is next to Palo Alto. Mountain View quickly turned her life around. Thelma involved herself in a career that had endless opportunities and opened many doors. It was the semiconductor industry where she met and sidled up to some very influential people. She established lasting friendships and took innumerable trips abroad.

Thelma worked and went to night school, soon earning an associate degree in electrical engineering to better understand the fundamental processes. She was called on to venture to Munich,

Germany to assist in a start-up company founded by one of the inventors of the transistor, Dr. Jean Hoerni.

Thelma hired and trained personnel besides helping to write process specifications, all in an unfamiliar language. She was hired on to work in Munich for two years and ended up staying there almost ten.

The opportunity gave Thelma and her daughter the chance to travel throughout Europe, making many trips to her father's beloved homeland, Greece.

She eventually returned to California to work with several other start-up companies as a production and operations manager. Today she acts as a consultant to keep her cognitive aspect alive. Her daughter, Cassandra, is an attorney and practices Intellectual Property Law. The two live in close proximity to one another and get to see each other frequently.

Her reconnection with her Milwaukee friends has been rewarding; like finding a twenty-dollar bill tucked away in a jacket pocket. Her part in the *Fractured Tales of Milwaukee* has been another wonderful adventure and it won't be the last.

Our Sad Farwell

Let's face it; we have reached the age where we are going to have to let go of many of our friends, and with each day the number increases. But we have the memories; the moments and a number of them are captured here in our chronicle. In no specific order they are:

Frank Scaffidi, David Schwartz, Sheldon (Earl) Tabak, Everett Kamuchey, Eddie Flynn, Dennis Flynn, Rob Hanley, Les Baumgardner, Jimmy Champion, Donna Eberhardt, Paul Micholovitz, Louie Aveni, Tom Balestreri, Snooky Cira, Aggie Snyder, Renie Snyder, Dolly Balestreri, Rosie Rothgaber, Mike Barrington, Brian Barrington, Pat Freeman, Eddie Ketchum, Ron Makowski, Paul Kostrivas, Jack Frannick, Patty Wettstein, Don Simeth, Jerry Stoltman, Stan Pollack. Jackie Chiaramonte, and Ziggy Zelinski, Rick Dorsch, Russell Rose, Artie Huth, and Jim Woods.

In closing, Billy Kamuchey contributes a touching story that personifies the heart and soul of the eastsider.

“Yesterday I performed my normal chores in the city (New York City) and finished up around 2:30, so I walked over to the west side line of Central Park and caught the C Subway up to 103rd and Columbus to visit a close friend of over thirty-five years, Ken Walter. Ken is in a Jewish hospital and nursing home recovering from hip surgery.”

“I have been visiting him for some time now and he recently took a turn for the worse. He stopped eating and became malnourished and dangerously thin.”

“When I arrived, Ken was no longer conscious as he lay in bed

with his eyes half open or half closed. His mouth hung open and his breathing forceful, but quiet. There were two hospice employees at his bedside and they informed me that this was the second day that Ken was unconscious.”

“I leaned over and spoke into Ken’s ear saying, ‘Hi Kenny, it’s your old friend Bill. Can you hear me?’”

“Not expecting a response, I continued to say, ‘I came to tell you how much I have enjoyed our friendship,’ and with a lump in my throat, I added, ‘and if you’re getting ready to leave us, then I guess the only thing I can say is that you’ll beat us to the other side of the rainbow. I hope that your journey will be a pleasant one, and I wish you God speed.’”

“By then the hospice ladies left the room. I remained at Ken’s bedside for another forty-five minutes before saying my silent goodbyes with prayers that my dear friend who had always shared his friendship with me in New York City, would make a smooth transition and be on his way to a better place.”

“Ken was my first introduction to the city and he gladly took me on walking tours, explaining the history behind each area. On one occasion we walked across the Brooklyn Bridge and on another he pointed out where Woody Allen set up his cameras to shoot films of Manhattan. I painted a picture of the bridge with our footprints in the snow and sent it to him. He had it framed and hung it on a wall in his place where it stood for many years.”

“Ken was generous in venturing out in public and enjoyed sharing his knowledge of the city sites. He loved pointing out where famous people lived and what they were famous for. It was a history lesson and it was fun. In short, Ken Walter was in love with his city.”

“After leaving him I was bombarded with wonderful memories

as I made my way back to Grand Central Station to catch my train home to Cold Spring. Can you imagine the thoughts that go through one's mind as we reflect upon a friend's life? It was a wonderfully powerful and significant time, so sobering and so meaningful."

"By the time I arrived home, Ken's brother phoned me from Milwaukee to tell me that the hospital called to inform him that Ken had passed away around 5 pm, only a short time after I had left him."

"As I sit here now, I can hear the music that Ken played in his apartment as we sat on his terrace on a warm evening, watching the sun set in the west with the glorious skyscraper horizon and the green tree tops in Central Park."

"After Ken retired from his career as a designer, he would sit on his terrace the entire evening 'til sunrise. He was a diehard night owl who at last got to enjoy staying up all night long."

"I wonder if Ken heard my voice, my thanks, my final farewell? Yes, I'm sure he did."



Bill Kamuchey, playing baseball with his brother Everett in the back yard of 1714 East Park Place, Milwaukee
(photo added for the 2023 online edition)

Appendix

The Cover ... Designed by Jamie Hanley and the photo of the Gang was taken by Dolores Herden Collura. Thelma Kamuchey, Pom Queen of Riverside High School in 1953 on the left. The gang in 1954. L-R John Balistreri, Jim Hanley, Tom Bones, Snookie Cira, Libby Hishmeh, Don Brier, Puggy Pozorski, Barbara Herden and Sam Randazzo.

The Back Cover ... Designed by Robin Hanley. Sitting near the corner of North Avenue and Farwell, L-R, John Fitch, Herb Carl, and Bill Gee, 2009.

Photo #7: Bartlett Avenue Kindergarten Photo in 1941. The little fella in the front is Don Bader. In the front row five from the left is Dave Ladwig and in the top row, far right is Eddie Pinzer. Two to the left, the gal with the curls, is Kathleen Barron.

Photo #8: Second Grade at St. Peter and Paul in 1953. **Top Row** L-R, Dave Ladwig, unknown, Tom Pokwinski, Nancy Boehm, Rosie Rothgaber, Nola Wilson, Winnie Sensiba. **Fourth Row**, unknown, unknown, Ray Skiba, Larry Linstadt, unknown, Bobby Besson, Don Maly, Johnny Voss, unknown, Jerry McCann. **Third Row**, Ray Boehm, Kenny Block, Bill Kucharski, Eddie Walsh, Eddie Pinzer, Tony Ryan, Robert Mathia, unknown, Don Schwabe, Kenny Mangen, Jimmy Goetz, Rick Dorsch. **Second Row**, Mary Ann Latona, Kathleen Barron, unknown, Nancy Murray, Helen Hendriks, Susan Wojohowski, unknown, Judy Andrews, unknown. **Bottom Row**, Patsy Schulist, unknown, unknown, Don Bader, Lynn Agnew, Shelia Geraghty, Gigi Gill.

Photo #10: The Kamuchey Children. **Top row**, L-R, Violet, Elaine, Evelyn, Evangeline, Everett. **Bottom row**, L-R, Thelma, Peter, Bill, Marie.

Photo #11: Maryland Avenue Eighth Grade. **Row One** (bottom) L-R, Bob Cleary, Joyce Feivor, Kathleen Edwards, Alvin Kirsch, Arnold Wilke, Adrienne Bergstrom, Bob Pegenau, Bob Bowen, Jullane Kiddell, Charlene Davis. **Row Two**, Mrs. Gaffney, Mavis Wagner, Janice Barnes, Phyllis Shelly, Jim Falvey, Marilyn Wagman, Delores Wentworth, Suzie Sand, Keith Reese, Mary Jane Stevens, and Fred Brandenburg. **Row Three**, Clay Williams, Judith Bernfield, Corrine Beckowski, Carol Knuth, Roger Beaumont, Martha McAssey, Sharon Doke, Charles Dreyfus, Kristine Kolokithas, Jerry Olson, **Row Four** (top), Edith Winters, Gordy Erdman, Sharon Van de Walker, Rudy Shafter, Annette Alioto.

Photo #12: Holy Rosary School. Far left front is Tom Cincotta and the boy praying next to him is Milwaukee attorney, Dickie Sendik. The third young guy in the top row is Bill Sheeley and directly to his left is Terry Dooley. Behind Cincotta is Father Ed Mathie, S.J., and behind him is Ted Foti. The big fell near the end of row two is Al Reider, while the standing boy is Frankie O'Shea.

Photo #16: Hartford Avenue School. **Top Row**, the third from the left is Bob Graf and next to him is Jim Woods. The second from the right is Ned Whitcomb. **Third row**, far right is Jim Lent. **Second row** far left is Eddie Kirkbride, an unknown, Kenny Voss, and Dave Adashek.

Photo #17: Fratney Street School Eighth Grade. **Top Row** L-R, The Principal, Don O, Robert Goessner, Jim Hishmeh, Keith M, Teacher. **Middle Row**, Teacher, Shirley Schreiber, Shirley Willman, Robert Goetz, Ray Blicharz, Shirley Liss, Clare Randa, Teacher. **Bottom Row**, Ron Kolowitz, Don Murray, Anita Newman, Joan Musiedlak, Betty Nerad, Doris Bertone, Doug Robinson, Ken Hofmeister. Ray Blicharz & Shirly Liss are still married to one another.

Photo #18: St. Mary's Eighth Grade Class. **Front row**, far left is Rosie Kosmider and the priest is Monsignor Woda. On **Row four**, far left is Paul Schramka, owner of one of Milwaukee's largest funeral parlors. On the **top row**, far right and next to the priest is Ron Sowinski.

Photo #24: Bartlett Avenue School Eighth Grade. **Front Row**, fourth from the left is Dianne Gruel (the first Mrs. Jim Hanley). **Row Two** on the far left is Don Kuster and two students to the right is Bill Kamuchey. Seven from the left is Carol Dohohue. On the **top row**, seven from the left is Tyrone Tabak.

Photo #25: John and Rob Hanley's joint birthday party. Starting from the front left and going clockwise are: Merle Cook, Ralph Wettstein, Bobby Kaltenbach, John Hanley, David Schwartz, Gordy Wettstein, Rob Hanley, Bobby Koch, and Bobby Romano.

Photo #32: Maryland Avenue City Softball Champs. **Top Row**, L-R, Freddy Gumina, Tommy Flynn, Tom Morana, Jimmy Flynn, Eddie Ketchum, and coach Don Simeth. **Bottom Row**, L-R, Bob Courtney, Santo Cincotta, and Jimmy Greenya. Missing from the photo are: Jimmy Champion, Bob McGuitty, and Jim Walthers.

Photo #34: The Brier/Pessante wedding. Rose Marie and Don Brier, both Riverside grads have been married since November 22, 1958. **Top Row**, L-R, Rosie Millbeck, Mario DeSanctis, Bob Ruggieri, Al Reider, Rose Marie Pessante, Don Brier, Joanne Ruggieri, Tony Pessante, Jim Hutchinson, Ted Foti, Steve Cira. **Front Row**, L-R, Louise Pitzo, Jeannie Gompf, Mary Ann Pessante (flower girl), Jim Cherubini (ring bearer), Joan Snavelly, Bonnie Cherubini, Joan, Coragio.

Photo #37: The Boys. **Front Row**, L-R, Ken Kensche, Snookie Cira, Buzzy Casamento, Jim (Stubs) Stepniewski,. **Top Row**, L-R, John Collins, Jim Flynn, Teddy Sorce, Jack Campbell, Eddie Flynn, and Terry Eberhardt.

Photo #45: Tom Flynn wins the Eastside Decathlon and humbly accepts the trophy from Jim Hanley. In the background L-R are, Riverside's AD and coach May, Joe Campagna, and Jim Aveni.

Photo #52: Warren (Mike) Adameak's Officiating Crew. From L-R, Jim Steinberg, Todd Rushniak, Mike Adameak, Jim Shaw, and Scott Thielmann.

Photo # 58: Jim Hanley's children celebrating Troy's 40th in Denver in 2009. L-R are, Mike, Scott, Jamie, Jim, Chris, Val, and Troy.

Photo #59: Fourth of July 2009 in Lake Park. L-R, Phyllis Casalena Wiegratz, Jim Hanley, John and Marianna Casalena, John Hanley, Lanny Nye, Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, Warren Wiegratz, Lynn Ketchum Edwinston, Jonathan Wiegratz, Mary Casalena Lundgren, and Thelma Kamuchey.

Photo #66: The sacred halls of Riverside HS during the Gathering of 2009. L-R, Joe Campagna, Terry Evans, Troy Hanley. Walking behind them are Susan and Bill Sheeley.

Photo #69: People from the book's cover. L-R, Barbara Herden, Don Brier, Libby Hishmeh, and Jim Hanley.

Photo #70: Terry Evans's resignation from the Federal Appeals Court to the President of the United States.

Appendix 2023 (online edition)

Family Photos provided by Thelma Kamuchey



The Kamuchey family residence, 1714 East Park Place,
Milwaukee, 1940s
John Kamuchey and Erna Boldewahn Kamuchey lived there
with their 9 children.
3 boys: Everett, Peter and Bill
6 girls: Violet, Evelyn, Elaine, Evange, Thelma and Marie
3 of the girls were born deaf: Violet (oldest), Evelyn and Marie



John Kamuchey and Erna Boldewahn Kamuchey, with their 2
children Thelma and Peter Kamuchey, 1940s
(colorized black and white photo)



Kamuchey siblings at Park Place:
 Back row, left to right: Violet, Evelyn, Evange
 Second row: Thelma, Peter, Marie
 Bottom front: Bill Kamuchey (colorized black and white photo)



Back, left to right: Evelyn and Marie Kamuchey
 Front: Peter and Thelma Kamuchey
 (colorized black and white photo)



In the summers, the Kamuchey children would visit their Uncle Peter Everett Kamuchey in St. Paul Minnesota. Uncle Peter was a prominent Greek attorney. Left to right: Everett Kamuchey (Uncle Peter's son), Evangeline and Peter Kamuchey. On the back of the photo was written: *"I made the skirt from flour sacks that my little brother Peter found. He also found a rope to use as a belt."*



Marie Kamuchey (left) and Thelma Kamuchey (right). Marie attended Gallaudet Deaf University in Washington DC, along with her other 2 deaf sisters, Violet and Evelyn. Marie competed in the 1957 Deaf Olympics in Italy and placed 5th for Freestyle and Backstroke. In 1961 she also competed in Helsinki but did not place. She later became a teacher at the Fremont, California School for the Deaf.



On Jan 28 1947, a blizzard paralyzed Milwaukee for 5 days. After the storm ended, schools were shut down. Marie, Peter, Bill and Evelyn went sledding in the nearby Riverside Park



The family did not have a refrigerator until the 1950s. In the winter, they would collect ice from the lake for their ice box. In the summer it would be delivered by the ice man.



A colorized photo of all 9 Kamuchey siblings:

Back row, left to right: Evelyn, Everett, Elaine, Marie, Evange

Bottom left, sitting: Thelma

Boy sitting in the center in striped shirt: Peter

Boy in suspenders sitting on Elaine's lap: Bill

Girl sitting on the right: Violet



Thelma was elected as the 1952-3 Winter Prom Queen in her senior year. Donald Hollack was her date

